

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE AMAZONIAN COMMUNITY OF
ITA, BRAZIL

BY

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by

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This dissertation analyzes economic and political changes stemming from the impact of post-1964 capitalist development policies in the Amazonian municipality of Itá. These changes are discussed within a historical framework which identifies various social-ecological adjustments that shape and limit the outcome of modern-day development efforts. Details of contemporary change and resistance are presented to demonstrate the complex and often paradoxical results of attempted capitalist development in the area.

Research is designed to answer several basic questions. For example, are development policies succeeding in articulating the local political economy more directly with

the national system? Is the traditional political economy being transformed? Are development efforts improving the standard of living in the community? Is there local resistance to development and, if so, why?

Findings indicate that the political economy is more closely integrated with the national system. However, at the same time the traditional system, based on the extraction of natural resources (timber, rubber, palm-heart) and organized through the trading post which operates by patron-client ties and debt-credit relationships, is still being maintained. As a result, historic patterns of predatory extraction leading to impoverishment of the biotic and social environments continues. Benefits of development for improved standards of living are transitory, and knowledge of higher standards of living elsewhere has increased feelings of relative deprivation.

Local resistance to political economic change stems from increasing threat to worker livelihood (through depletion of resources, restrictions on land use, land eviction, lack of internal market for agricultural produce, population increase) and increasing worker independence (through the introduction of a cash economy and reduction of trading posts controlling worker exchange). Political-religious conscious-raising by the Catholic Church has led to worker activism (boycotts of trading posts, blocking of evictions from land and of extraction of timber and palm-heart from property contested by occupants,

election success for a worker's party, and union organization).

Workers' success has increased class tensions and threatens to permanently reorder the political system. Success in reordering the economic order, however, proves more difficult. Long lasting ecological and economic structures intrinsic to the extractive economy of the Amazon must be overcome.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Presented here is an anthropological study of economic and political change. It is an intensive case study of change in the small rural Amazonian community known as Itá. Itá is a pseudonym for a municipality (the Brazilian equivalent of a county) and small town located on the lower Amazon River in the state of Pará, Brazil. The community was originally studied by Charles Wagley during various trips between 1942-1962 and his student Eduardo Galvão during three months in 1948. From their research came Wagley's Amazon Town (1953, 1976) and Galvão's Santos e Visagens (1955). During the 1970s and 1980s three additional studies were carried out. One was an historical dissertation of the area including Itá (Kelly 1984), the second a six-week anthropological re-study of the community (Miller 1976), and the third a short study of the community's health care delivery system and use of medicinal plants (McGee 1986). This present work is an updated analysis of economic and political change occurring in Itá since Wagley's and Galvão's original research.

Since the 1948 studies of Itá, the Brazilian Amazon has undergone tremendous change. This change stems from a

enterprise during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to develop the region and to integrate it more closely into the national political economy. This drive is being realized through government construction of infrastructure such as highways, railroads, hydroelectric dams, communications systems, schools, and public health facilities. The government has also financed colonization projects and continues to finance large scale mining projects. In addition, the government promotes private development through land concessions, subsidies, and tax breaks. Private development efforts go into cattle ranching, lumber and pulp processing, colonization, and mining.

At the same time that these projects are undertaken, and as a direct result, there are numerous incidents of dispossession of land, violence, oppression, and even genocide (among indigenous populations). Development, in the form of cattle ranches, mining, dams, and timber extraction, also leads to the destruction of fragile jungle ecosystems. All these changes promise to permanently change the Amazon region in one way or another. Who will benefit from these changes, however, is a debatable question. The community of Itá fits into this regional picture as a poor and relatively unimportant area on the fringe of development efforts. Few government planners up until this point in time concern themselves with the area. Its only redeeming economic quality during the last twenty years has been its natural resources (timber, palm-heart, rubber) which, on the

whole, are exported to other locations for processing. Despite its relative unimportance for regional development plans, the municipality is deeply affected by national and regional development policies. As will be seen, these policies have set in motion an extraction boom in timber and, to a lesser extent, palm-heart, by attracting national and international firms into the area. In addition, government development policies have led to the establishment of numerous small sawmills and to increases in rubber extraction. Development policies also temporarily augmented food production and led to two years of oil exploration by Brazil's national oil company.

The introduction of new economic activity is paralleled by increased bureaucratic expansion into the area, new political alignments between local dominant groups and the state, and the creation of organized worker resistance to these changes. These economic and political novelties threaten, or promise, to radically change traditional economic and political institutions in place for over a hundred years. Whether or not these changes can bring about improvements in standards of living for the people of Itá, however, is a basic question to be explored in the following pages.

Despite Itá's unimportant status, a study of the community still retains great relevance to the wider understanding of the development process occurring in the Amazon. This is because development efforts to date have

been limited in scope and have directly affected only a small part of the Amazon. This part may even be thought of in terms of development islands or pockets (Mahar 1983:319). For the rest of the Amazon, development occurs in haphazard, piecemeal, or residual form if at all.

Likewise, social science research also tends to concentrate on development pockets. Most major studies are focused upon the Transamazon Highway and surrounding areas (Martins 1983, 1985; Ianni 1978; Velho 1972; Schmink and Wood 1984; Bunker 1985; Foweraker 1981; Moran 1981, 1983; Smith 1982; and Mahar 1979). Others are concerned with development and native populations (see Davis 1977). Studies covering the more isolated and less affected non-Indian communities, however, are fairly limited (Parker 1985:xxviii). Among these are Brado (1977), Parker (1981), Sternberg (1956), Wagley (1953), and Galvão (1955). Therefore, a study of Itá, a community on the margins of recent development, should add a needed dimension to understanding the overall pattern of Amazonian development.

Interestingly, it was this same lack of importance that first attracted anthropological interest in the community. In Wagley's and Galvão's 1948 study Itá was described as a small, poor, under-developed peasant community. To Wagley, these qualities made Itá representative of underlying problems of the Amazon at the time. He wrote "because Itá is a poor community without any special industry or natural gifts and without any special distinction, a study of Itá

focuses a spotlight on the basic problems of the region" (1976:22). Twenty-eight years later in 1986, Itá is still a small, poor, underdeveloped community. And perhaps, due to the reasons presented above, we might still conclude as Wagley did in the early 1950s that the story of Itá can focus a spotlight on the basic problems of the region.

The Research Problem

The research problem has three parts. The first part seeks to understand the direct impact of national and regional development policies in Itá. For example, are development policies succeeding in articulating the local political economy more directly with the national system. Is the political economy being transformed? How is this occurring? What are the consequences? Second, are development efforts improving the standard of living in the community? Who is benefiting from development and who is not? And third, is there local resistance to development? What groups are resisting, why are they resisting, and how are they resisting?

This research focus has direct relevance to several theoretical debates occurring in the literature on development studies. For example, the above questions address debates surrounding the problem of unitary versus multiple modes of production and the problem of the passive periphery. The first debate pits Wallerstein's world systems paradigm against Marxian and Neo-Marxian views of

distinct modes of production. Wallerstein (1974:390) maintains there is only one global mode of production, which is capitalism. The Marxian line maintains that there are multiple modes of production in the world, each defined by an internal division of labor and ordered in lineal succession (Nash 1981:396-7).

The second debate stems from a corollary of the unitary perspective. In Frank's (1967) view, satellite countries (countries not part of the industrialized metropolises which consist of Western Europe, the United States, and Japan) are the passive recipients of the dynamic penetration of the modernizing capitalist system. The satellite, or periphery countries, are treated as "passive victims" universally giving way to capitalist invasion (Nash 1981:398). Opposing views (Leclau 1971) maintain that capitalism actually preserves non-capitalist modes of production by articulating and extracting value from these systems. Long (1977) also maintains that the passive periphery view underestimates the impact of lower-level organizations on national and international structures and also the complexity of local rural systems.

Light may be shed on both of these debates by closely examining the internal workings of periphery economies. As will be shown by this case study, Itá's local economy is decidedly not capitalist, although it has been articulated with the world capitalist system at least since the 19th century. Likewise, this case study will describe how

various groups react to capitalist penetration and either attempt to integrate capitalist relations into the existing system, or attempt to reorder the system into a new form, neither capitalist nor traditional.

The succeeding chapters will deal with the research problem in the following order. Articulation and transformation of the political economy will be discussed in its historical and contemporary context in Chapters Three, Four, and Five. In particular Chapter Three will cover the historical formations of the regional and local political economy. Special emphasis will be given to descriptions of adjustments which shape and limit present-day development efforts. Chapter Four will discuss the multiple economic changes initiated after the Brazilian military coup in 1964. Chapter Five will examine the political changes engendered by development policies and by changes in national politics since 1964. The second part of the research problem (change in standards of living) will be addressed in Chapters Two and Four. The third part of the research problem (local resistance) will be discussed in Chapter Five. In each chapter the study will attempt to depict the complex internal workings which have marked Itá's increasing contact with the Brazilian political economy.

Methodology

Fieldwork for this dissertation was conducted during three trips between 1983 and 1986. The first trip lasted

from May to July, 1983, the second December 1984 to October 1985, and the third June to July, 1986. A total of eleven months was spent in the municipality of Itá. Approximately eight months of this time was spent in the town of Itá where a permanent residence was maintained (first in a boarding house, then in a house we renovated which was owned by, and connected to the home of José Marajó, see Miller 1976:300). Approximately three months was spent in the rural interior with numerous hosts. The majority of time in the rural interior was spent in five hamlets/neighborhoods (Bacá, Jocojó, Camutá, Mojú, Mararú) while the remaining time was spent on five trips surveying approximately 75% of the municipality by boat (the northwestern part of the municipality was not visited). Two of the five survey trips were in conjunction with a yellow fever vaccination campaign sponsored by SUCAM (Superintendência de Campanhas or Superintendency of Campaigns) and the prefeitura (municipal government). The remaining month was spent on a trip down the Transamazon highway, from Belém to Itaituba and then Santarém, and a trip south to Rio de Janeiro.

For seven and a half months I was accompanied by my wife, Olga, who assisted in various aspects of fieldwork. Particularly important was her ability to establish rapport in the community. Through her daily conversations with neighbors, her free haircuts, and her free English classes,

Dona Olga (Mrs. Olga) became well known in town (people in town were sure that all these free services were part of a religious promesa or promise to Saint Benedict, see Chapters Two, Three, and Five for further discussion of the saints). Rapport building was further aided by many people's fond memories of Doutor Charles (Dr. Charles) and Dona Cecilia Wagley and Doutor Eduardo and Dona Clara Galvão. There was little questioning of my purpose in the town as everyone knew I was there to write another book like the ones they greatly cherished by Professors Charles and Eduardo. Showing several copies of the books, which were always asked for and given as gifts, never failed to initiate conversation about the "old days," on rubber collecting, hunting, festivals, saints, and forest visagens (spirits).

Although establishing rapport in the town was fairly easy, establishing ties with inhabitants of the rural interior proved more problematic. Access to scattered homes along rivers and streams was by slow canoe or expensive diesel motor boat (rented for US \$15 a day plus food for the captain and assistant). Furthermore, as will be seen in Chapter Five, a political struggle for control of the municipality pitted the town elite against the rural workers. The political struggle created a growing uneasiness in the rural interior about strangers, especially light-skinned foreigners who collected data suspiciously similar to that taken by government census takers. What was even more distressing were the direct questions about

individual political affiliations. These suspicions were partly overcome by repeated visits to a few selected communities and frank and open discussions about local, national, and international political economies.

Still, there was some hesitation in conversation about politics, which in all honesty was necessary for the protection of various individuals. It was clearly noticeable that rural inhabitants conversed more freely about politics when in the rural interior than in the town. As one rural worker stated, "there are too many ears in town that will get workers in trouble if they speak too freely."

The methodology used for data collection included participant observation, informal and semi-formal interviewing of acquaintances and key informants, and the application of two interview schedules. Participation observation involved attendance at all town events. These included religious and secular festivals, weddings, birthday parties, funerals, sports events, Masses at the Catholic Church, neighborhood Bible meetings, religious processions, political events (rallies, speeches, elections), dances, nightly activities in bars and pool halls, nightly social promenades around the town square, and vaccination campaigns. In addition, my wife and I participated in ritual ceremonies to establish fictive kin. By passing over the bonfire during the Saint John festival we both acquired co-parents and a godson of the bonfire. Also, when infections struck (a common occurrence in the tropical

environment) I attended curing sessions by benzedores (blessers), Kardecian mediums, and Umbanda mediums. These visits to blessers and mediums were always preceded by visits to the town health post. In the interior, participation observation included trips to roças (gardens) and to timber extraction sites as well as engaging in conversation at trading posts and in religious meetings.

The informal and semi-formal interviews were conducted whenever informants could be cornered. Interviews were frequently conducted on the streets, at the meat market, at the docks, in trading posts and stores, in bars, on boats, at the Church, at the roça, and in people's homes. Questions were always open-ended with discussions taking whatever direction the informant desired. Several key informants were singled-out for more intensive interviewing. These key informants were well enlightened about local political and economic events as well as the workings of the Catholic Church. The final data collecting method involved administering interview schedules. The interview schedules were designed by Dr. Conrad Kottak for use in a separate study on the impact of television in Brazil. Itá was part of that study. The interview schedules were adapted to include significant questions about political economic change. The questions are listed in the appendix of this work.

The first interview schedule was a household survey given to five groups of people. A total of 108 interview

schedules were administered. One group included a 9% random sample of homes in the town. There were forty-nine homes in this sample. The remaining four groups resided in the rural interior. Two were rural farming hamlets on the terra firme (land never flooded by the river) and two were rural neighborhoods on the várzea (floodplain). These hamlet/neighborhoods were selected to represent the major ecological zones in the municipality (see Chapter Two). The selection process for these communities did not involve any other sampling technique.

One of the farming hamlets in this sample is Jocojó. This community was studied by Wagley and Galvão, which attracted my initial attention. I introduced myself to the hamlet through numerous spontaneous visits. The second farming hamlet is Camutá. I was introduced to the people in this community through a timber contractor doing business there. One of the várzea neighborhoods is on the Mararú River. I was introduced to the people of this community through a trading post owner and a store clerk in town who left the community two years previously. The final community is a várzea neighborhood located on the Mojú River. Initial contact with people of this community came through various Church functions in town.

In each hamlet/neighborhood a 58%-88% non-random sample was taken. A total of fifty-nine interview schedules were administered, fifteen in Jocojó, sixteen in Camutá, fifteen in Mararú, and thirteen in Mojú. The second

interview schedule was an individual survey given to various members listed in the household surveys. A total of eighty-nine individual surveys were administered, sixty-one within the random sample in town, fourteen in Jocojón and fourteen in Camutá. All the household interview schedules were given by myself with the aid of my wife. The individual interview schedules were administered by myself and a locally hired research assistant.

All of the personal names used in this work are fictitious. Even the name of the town and municipality have been changed. This has been done in an attempt to protect the privacy of the people described in this study.

CHAPTER II THE SETTING

The municipality of Itá is situated in an area just above the extensive delta zone of the lower Amazon River, approximately 500 nautical miles inland from the ocean. It is not a large municipality by Amazon standards. It only encompasses 9,309 square kilometers. As the river reaches the municipality of Itá from the west it begins to break up into numerous channels which weave their way around the island of Marajó northward to the city of Macapá and southward to Belém. Just west of Itá the Amazon River divides and forms the Great Island of Itá (see Figure 2:1). Despite this partition, the branch of the river which passes in front of the town of Itá (the name of the municipality and town are the same) is still nearly six kilometers in width. The river is also sufficiently deep to allow the uninhibited passage of large ocean going ships.

Like most of the Amazonian interior, the municipality of Itá is sparsely populated. The total population is 16,300 with a population density of 1.1 per square kilometer (IBGE 1980). Of this total, 2,268 people live in town which serves as the political, administrative, and commercial center of the municipality (IBGE 1980). As in the 1940s when Wagley and Galvão studied Itá, there is no overland



Figure 2:1 Map of the Municipality of Itá

connection between the community and surrounding towns. There is one eighteen kilometer dirt road which leads from the town into the rural interior. This road, however, does not connect to anything and is primarily used to transport timber and to service the needs of a few rural inhabitants. Lacking overland routes, riverboat transportation continues to be the most common and affordable means of travel to Itá. There are some twenty-six passenger and cargo ships which stop weekly in town. These ships range in size from the government owned ENASA ships which are made of metal and have a passenger capacity of 500, to a ten meter boat named Santa Clara which can transport several tons of cargo and three or four people. Except for the ENASA ships, all ships are wooden. The trip between Itá and Belém (the nearest large city, population near 1,000,000) by the larger ships averages thirty-six hours upstream and twenty-four hours downstream.

A second route to Itá is by airplane. Small private twin and single engine planes can be rented to fly to Itá for approximately US \$300. There is also a commercial flight which leaves once a week and connects Belém with Itá and two other small towns near Itá. The plane has a seating capacity of seven. The flight to Belém takes an hour and forty-five minutes. Passage on the airplane averages US \$100 one way. At such high prices, few natives of Itá can afford the service.

The Town of Itá

Traveling to the town of Itá by riverboat from Belém is a slow monotonous journey. Except for a few narrow straits near the town of Breves, the jungle shore is too far away to distinguish detail. For the most part the view consists of the muddy brown river water, a distant unbroken green wall of forest, and a blue sky highlighted with clouds. The only breaks in the monotony are the one to three times the ship pulls into small towns that dot the expansive river. There is also a brief passage by one community whose residents paddle out to the moving ship to beg for food or clothing to be thrown into the water for them to retrieve. On board, the ship is likely to be overcrowded and hot. Hammocks, the only sleeping arrangements on most ships, are strung up everywhere on deck. During peak travel days, such as during summer vacation, the hammocks will be hung three atop of one another. Food is provided on most passenger ships. Unfortunately for the unaccustomed traveler, it is prepared in river water which often results in digestive dysfunctions.

After a day and a half of travel, the riverboat reaches Itá. As the ship approaches the town from the east, the scene is slightly different from the approach described by Wagley in 1948 (Wagley 1976:27). The first landmark to be distinguished from the blurred green of the jungle is a gleaming silver brasilite (corregated asbestos material)

roof of a large abandoned sawmill. Protruding from the sawmill is a dock that until recently was used to load lumber onto foreign-bound cargo ships. Next to the sawmill is another abandoned building that once housed a palm-heart canning factory. Both industries prospered briefly and then closed down due to financial mismanagement and soft national and international markets for their produce. Now they are both symbols of the promise of economic boom and the reality of economic bust which have characterized the Amazon economy for nearly 350 years.

Beyond these abandoned buildings rises the rocky outcropping where most of the town of Itá is located. Upon this bluff stands a recently reconstructed fort which used to guard the Amazon River in the beginning of the 17th century. Near the fort is the highly visible Catholic Church with its whitewashed walls and shiny zinc roof. As the boat passes the church a dozen skyrockets are fired from aboard. This traditional salute honors Saint Benedict who is housed in the church. Saint Benedict is the protector saint for river travel, for rubber collectors, and for the poor in general. The skyrockets are also a payment for a promesa (promise) to the saint as he keeps the travelers safe in their journey.

The church is surrounded by a number of buildings belonging to the parish. There is a long brick barracão (shelter) with large open arches in the walls. The barracão is used for the celebration of Itá's patron

saint's festival, Saint Anthony, and for the larger festival for Saint Benedict. There is also a two-story building originally meant to be a high school but which, due to a lack of teachers, serves as the nun's residence and as an occasional classroom for Church-sponsored seminars. Down the street a block is the new headquarters for the parish and residence for the priest. This building is the finest in town and is the source of both pride to supporters and envy to detractors of the Church. As indicated from the physical evidence seen from the river, the Catholic Church has a strong presence in Itá. And as will be discussed later, this strong presence has sparked controversy as the Church has increasingly taken an active stand on the social and political ills affecting the community.

As the river boat continues to pass in front of Itá the next visible landmark is a bright new sign advertising the bank of Itaú. This bank opened in 1985 after a political struggle to keep it out of town. A few local elites preferred to keep Itá bankless in order to preserve their control over the distribution of municipal finances. Beyond the bank is the infamously extravagant town hall which has drained municipal coffers to build and maintain since its inception in the early 1900s. True to its past, the town hall has only been used intermittently since the 1940s. In fact, the hall sat idle for nearly a decade until 1984 when funds were finally procured to make needed repairs. The town hall now overflows with a variety of

government agencies created during the 1970s. These government agencies and the bank are clear signs of Itá's increasing integration into the Brazilian state's political and economic system.

In the distance behind the court house rises a high communications tower. The tower serves a public radio-telephone post with two outgoing channels to Belém. Beginning in 1986 this service has been expanded to include a dozen private telephones in the homes of some of the more affluent residents. Just below the tower, although hidden from view of the river, is a large satellite dish for receiving television transmissions. The dish was installed in early 1986, in time for the World Cup Soccer games. As of July of 1986 there are some eighty television sets in private homes with that number growing rapidly. With the telephone, television, and radio (which people have had since the 1950s) the community of Itá is in much closer contact with the outside world than ever before.

A kilometer after the river boat passes the fort and church it pulls into a small inlet to dock at the municipal trapiche (wharf). The trapiche has been rebuilt since 1948 and now extends twenty-five meters into the river. There are numerous five to ten meter diesel powered boats tied up along it. These boats were introduced into Itá in the 1950s and became common possessions by the 1970s. For those who can afford them, they create a superior alternative to traditional travel by canoe and sailboat. For people living

in the far reaches of the municipality, the boats cut travel time to the town of Itá by days.

On the end of the wharf people congregate to watch the arrival of the boat. A Volkswagen van and Itá's only taxi await the disembarking of goods and people. In all Itá boasts four cars and three trucks which are in working order. Alongside the automobiles wait three men with carts who will manually carry cargo or luggage the short distance into town for a fee. Behind the men is Itá's only horse-powered cart which likewise will carry cargo into town. Leaving the boat and walking to shore one approaches a street built upon a swampy area. In 1948 a simple path led into town. Today this paved street is lined with warehouses, stores, bars, restaurants, a dance hall, a boarding house, a meat market, and even a large brick Pentecostal Church which claims seventy-two members. This former swamp has become the commercial center of the town.

Leaving the wharf area and ascending the bluff one can see the extent to which Itá has grown since 1948. Where once there were three dirt streets running parallel to the river and several running perpendicular to these, there are now six parallel and ten perpendicular streets. Two of streets parallel to the river are surfaced with concrete slabs while another two running south from the river (to the airstrip and soccer field) are being paved. All streets are named after important people, saints, or political events. They are marked with nicely designed wooden signs. Despite

this effort, people still refer to streets by number (First, Second, Third, etc.) as they did in 1948 (Wagley 1976:23).

An inventory of buildings shows that Itá now has a hospital, a medicine post, a pharmacy, a Legal Forum and residence for a judge and prosecutor when passing through town, an electrical plant with two large diesel powered engines to supply the town with six hours of energy per day, a pump house which supplies approximately 60% of the town with filtered well water for twelve hours a day, a post office, a library, a police station and jail, a newly established machine shop, and a state school. Within the town there are also some eighteen retail stores and/or trading posts, fourteen dance halls (some only function during festival time), seven bars, four restaurants, three bakeries, and a watch repair shop. In addition, Itá has three docks (including the sawmill's dock), a crude dirt airstrip, a municipal cemetery, a soccer field, and a lighted sports complex for indoor soccer, basketball, and volleyball.

Since 1948 the town has filled out and expanded as the population has grown from 629 in 1950 to 2,268 by 1980 (IBGE 1950, 1980). There are no longer the vacant blocks within town that Wagley saw (1976:24). Most homes are closely spaced, some connected to one another. All are flush to the street. Behind the house is the traditional backyard (quintal) often surrounded by a high fence in the more prosperous homes. In the quintal, people have fruit trees,

raised herbal box gardens (often for medicinal plants), chickens, ducks, pigs, laundry facilities (there is only one washing machine in town), and outhouses. The condition of most houses in Itá appears to be somewhat better than described in 1948. Many houses are only a few years old and well kept. Even many of the older houses (the oldest date to over 100 years) have been remade, especially the façades facing the street. Many houses near the riverfront are kept brightly painted in pastel colors. The further one ventures from the river, however, the more likely houses will be unpainted.

The general up-grading in housing conditions is a clear reflection of a new cycle of prosperity resulting from government development policies. These policies have stimulated increases in timber and palm-heart extraction, sawmills, and the temporary presence of an oil prospecting firm. In the case of timber an economic boom has provided many individuals with cash and inexpensive materials to improve homes. Itá's houses by 1985 were overwhelmingly made of locally sawn wood (90% of the 9% random sample in town) whereas in 1948 a large portion were made of the less valued palm-thatch (Wagley 1976:25). There are also a few houses constructed of the traditional taipa (wattle work filled with clay and with a sand and lime plaster finish) (1%), of the highly prized brick covered by plaster or cement (8%), and of the cheap and lowly valued palm-thatch (1%). The houses are roofed with ceramic tile and brasilite

(51%), or palm-thatching (49%). All have raised wooden floors or concrete floors.

Other signs suggesting economic prosperity are people's increased ability to consume imported durable items. (This consumer power was greatly enhanced in 1986 when nation-wide price freezes were enacted to reduce inflation. In Itá the freeze lowered prices of imported goods which led to high levels of consumption. Most stores quickly sold out their stocks and a shortage of these goods ensued.) From a random sample in town of 9% of the private residencies (forty-nine houses) it was found that 67% of households owned gas stoves (instead of charcoal and wood burning stoves), 43% owned refrigerators, 63% possessed radios, 57% had wrist watches, and 66% beds (instead of hammocks).

As in 1948 and in 1974 (Miller 1976:308), the urban ecology of 1986 still tends to reflect levels of affluency. The most highly prized land is still that closest to the river. The wealthier families tend to locate there. For example, most of the prosperous business people, civil servants, politicians, and the clergy live within the first two streets running parallel to the river. In the remaining four streets the poor are concentrated. Table 2:1 demonstrates another aspect of this spatial distribution pattern. Houses lacking electricity and those with palm-thatch roofing, both traits that are locally recognized symbols of lower status, are more prevalent on streets farther from the river.

TABLE 2:1 Percent of Homes Lacking Electricity and Possessing Palm-thatch Roofing by Street in Itá.

Street*	% lacking electricity	% with palm roofing	No. of houses
1st.	10%	13%	60
2nd.	38%	16%	141
3rd.	58%	57%	124
4th.	57%	57%	91
5th.	79%	69%	85
6th.	100%	93%	15

*1st. street is closest to the river and 6th street is the most distant

At first glance the changes occurring in the town suggest that Itá has enjoyed a fair degree of prosperity since Wagley and Galvão described it. The town has grown in thirty-eight years and boasts new businesses, new services, new buildings, and new consumption habits. But there are many problems which still remain unattended. For example, health care delivery is still precarious for the community. There are one doctor, one dentist, one nurse, one biochemist, and ten nurse-aids working in one small hospital. This staff is responsible for the health of the entire urban and rural population of the municipality of Itá, which is 16,300 people (in comparison to other rural municipalities in Pará, however, Itá's meager health care system is much better than average!).

With at best minimal facilities and supplies, the hospital of Itá must deal with high rates of disease and trauma. In the period between 1981 and 1985 the hospital recorded the following cases: measles--77, cholera--4, tetanus--2, infectious hepatitis--41, intestinal parasitic infections--1530, malaria--189 (180 of these cases occurred in 1985 alone), leishmanias--5, tuberculosis-- 28, leprosy--30, meningitis--3, and gonorrhea--1 (SESPA 1985). These numbers undercount the disease rate in the municipality since many people do not or cannot come to the hospital. Particularly in the case of malaria, probably more than half of the cases go unrecorded. The average infant mortality rate from 1981 to 1985 was 38.6 per

thousand (SESPA 1985). These disease and death rates, plus the poorly equipped and staffed hospital, prompted one health official in Itá to state that the idea that public health exists in Itá, let alone Brazil, is a myth.

Health standards are further complicated by economic conditions in town. Unemployment and underemployment run high as there are few jobs in the urban sector, especially since the large sawmill and palm-heart factory closed down and Petrobras left the area. Wage labor jobs are difficult to secure on a permanent basis and when they are found they usually pay poorly. Most households therefore suffer persistent shortages of money. Lack of money limits access to medicine or to special medical facilities located only in Belém, where transportation, room, and board must be paid.

In addition, lack of cash can lead to serious problems in obtaining food. In town if individuals lack cash and do not have access to a garden plot for food crops (which many do not), then the only "free" food is fish procured from the river. Even with a small amount of money, food may be hard to come by. Due to the agrarian structure in the rural interior of Itá (to be discussed in Chapter Four), the food produced by farmers is often not enough to support the urban population. Much of Itá's food, therefore, is imported. All imported commodities in Itá are expensive since there is a substantial price mark-up. For example, a survey taken by the author in 1985 compared the prices of twenty-one commonly used items sold in the major retail store in Itá

and a supermarket in Belém. The items included rice, beans, manioc, sugar, salt, powdered milk, condensed milk, crackers, coffee, corn flour, canned meat, bottled water, soft drinks, cigarettes, soap, razor blades, light bulbs, pens, matches, steel wool, and toilet paper. The results of the survey showed that prices in Itá averaged 79% higher than in Belém (the mark-up includes transportation costs, import taxes, and merchant's profits). In addition, there was another price difference of 17% between Itá's retail store and Itá's leading trading post which sold goods on credit.

Among the people of Itá, private and public complaints are continuously voiced about the persistent lack of food and employment. Conversations on the street inevitably turn to discussions of where fish, meat, or fruits might be obtained. When people walk down the street with locally procured food they are bombarded with questions about who is selling, where are they selling, and how high is the price. When a boatload of fish pulls up along shore there are long lines of people vying to buy the limited supply. When cattle are slaughtered in the meat market, chaos results from crowds of pushing and shouting people hoping to get a piece of meat before all is gone. The only hint of order customarily occurs for the elderly who are allowed first choice of beef.

Similarly, people are often heard complaining that there are no good jobs to be had in Itá. In the individual

interview schedule given to the 9% random sample in town, the lack of jobs was described as Itá's main problem by 39% of the population surveyed (8% responded lack of food, 8% cost of living, 7% political infighting, 13% a combination of poor education, health, transportation, public administration of funds, and courtesy, while 25% did not respond). The only jobs which are widely available are in subsistence agriculture and extraction. Agriculture is disdained by many because prices for produce are so low that they provide for little more than subsistence. Extraction (timber, rubber, palm-heart, cacao) is not desirable to many either because it is a difficult job that does not compensate for the physical punishment involved or because it does not pay well enough.

Due to the continuous problems of work and food, many town residents have formed a low opinion of Itá in relation to surrounding municipalities. Itá is considered a backward (atrasado) place that has experienced little progress. People frequently comment that Itá is one of the oldest towns in the Amazon (founded around 1609), but yet, unlike many of its younger neighbors, has failed to improve itself. In fact, for many town residents there is an explicit hierarchy of desirable places to live according to availability of food, jobs, health care, and educational facilities. Belém usually tops the list, followed by smaller towns such as Santarém, Macapá, Breves, Obidos,

Alerím, and Porto de Móz. At the bottom of the list is Itá.

The Rural Interior

Like the town of Itá, the rural interior of Itá has also changed since 1948. In fact, as will be discussed in the following chapters, the main dynamic of economic and political change in the municipality of Itá has occurred here. The rural interior, or simply interior as defined by people in Itá, includes all land outside of the town limits. It consists of the vast majority of population and area of the municipality. In the years since Wagley's study the rural population of the municipality has grown only modestly from 11,700 in 1950 to 13,532 in 1980 (IBGE 1950, 1980). A small part of this increase is due to an expansion in the boundaries of the municipality by nearly one third from 6,094 to 9,309 square kilometers. Taking into account the natural population growth of 1.11 per year and the geographic expansion of the municipality, the numbers suggest that the municipality has actually lost, at minimum, over 2000 people due to migration.

The largest part of Itá's interior, approximately 75%, is made up of an ecological zone called the várzea (throughout the Amazon region várzea accounts for only 2% of the total land area). The várzea is the floodplain of the river. In Itá there are two distinctive types of várzea. The first is the várzea do rio (river floodplain)

which is flooded by seasonal rises in the river, usually between the months of December and May. This land benefits from the deposit of silt from the seasonal floods which greatly increases the potential for annual agricultural use. The only constraint for agriculture is the relatively short growing season (three to four months) when the water levels are low enough to plant. The second type of várzea is called the várzea da maré (tidal floodplain). This area is flooded on a daily basis by freshwater tides. Although Itá is well over 500 nautical kilometers from the ocean, it is still in the estuary region which is affected daily by the dynamic of the tides. In this part of the várzea the water will rise and fall one to two meters daily. This constant rise and fall of water essentially eliminates agricultural activity.

Since the 19th century the várzea area has been of primary importance to the economy of Itá. On the várzea are rich stands of rubber trees; cacao, hardwoods, softwoods, and natural grasslands for cattle. The várzea is also a rich source of riverine fauna including many species of fish and an occasional water turtle, caiman, otter, and manatee. Of secondary importance to the local economy are the small várzea garden plots dedicated to the production of quick growing crops such as corn, beans, and rice. Facilitating the human use of the várzea are numerous rivers, lakes, swamps, and igarapés (streams)

which serve as natural highways for easy penetration of the area.

The second ecological zone making up approximately 25% of the municipality of Itá is known as the terra firme (throughout the Amazon region the terra firme makes up 98% of total land area). The terra firme is the upland area which is never inundated by water. The terra firme is characterized by generally poor soils which are easily leached and eroded by the tropical rains. In Itá the terra firme soils are said to be of varying quality. Some of the land will produce adequate yields of corn, beans, rice, and pineapples, although not on an annual basis. Fruit trees are also grown. However, a good portion of land is reported to be adequate only for the growing of manioc (cassava), a hardy starchy root crop which is the staple food of Amazonian populations.

Up until the present the terra firme of Itá has been mainly used for limited production of staple crops, mainly manioc which will not grow on the wet várzea. Since there is little in the way of a developed transportation system through the terra firme, penetration for agriculture is confined to the areas immediately surrounding one of the many igarapés. People do regularly venture into the more distant terra firme to hunt and, more recently, to extract timber for export. But as will be seen, extracting timber on the terra firme is an expensive endeavor and few people

can afford the capital investment needed to build logging roads and finance a truck to transport logs.

Human occupation of the várzea and terra firme usually occurs in two forms. On the várzea homes are strung out along the banks of the rivers and streams. Often there are several hundred meters between houses. This spatial arrangement is both an ecological and economic adjustment to the extractive activities ubiquitous to the várzea. The ecological adjustment allows each household direct access to the waterway for transportation. This is essential since the várzea land is often too swampy or muddy to cross by foot. The constant rise and fall of the water level in the tidal várzea also means that houses and all walkways must be raised on stilts. Fewer wooden walkways are required if houses are located directly on the bank.

Spatial separation is also an economic adjustment to the extractive economy. People on the várzea make their living by collecting rubber, cacao, açaí (Eutrepe oleracea which produces a palm nut which is used to make a traditional drink); by cutting timber and palm-heart (among the trees used to produce palm-heart is the same tree which produces açaí); and by planting subsistence garden plots where the land permits. In the case of rubber and cacao, which have historically been the mainstays of economic activity in Itá, people tend to locate in proximity to the stands of trees to save time in daily transportation. Although people have planted these trees to increase

densities, the stands of trees must still be widely scattered if they are to survive attacks by disease and pests. Maintaining easy access to these scattered stands means people usually must build their houses fairly distant from their nearest neighbor.

Despite the distance between individual households on the várzea, there are community clusters, or "neighborhoods" as Wagley described them (1976:29). These neighborhoods are organized in two ways, although these ways are not mutually exclusive. First, neighborhoods may be organized around a trading post maintained by a local landowner or merchant. The landowner/merchant supplies basic necessities and some consumer items while buying the produce of the neighborhood residents. Often the trading post will be the social as well as commercial center where people may stop by to chat, hear the latest news, and, for the men, get a shot of cachaça (a type of rum).

Second, neighborhoods are organized into sectors by the Catholic Church. Prior to the 1970s many neighborhoods organized themselves into religious brotherhoods to celebrate the festival of the community's patron saint or saints. The Church had little actual control over these organizations. Since the 1970s, however, the resident priest has made a tremendous effort to organize and build upon these brotherhoods. As a result, many várzea neighborhoods are increasingly becoming cohesive religious groups known as comunidades de base (basic communities) or

simply as comunidades (communities). Some of these comunidades have established communally run trading posts (bypassing the inflated prices charged at the traditional trading post), medicine posts, and nearly all have coordinated labor exchanges among members. In addition, these comunidades have often organized themselves into grassroot political organizations active in an incipient rural union movement and in support of a local opposition political party called the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party).

In contrast to the human occupation of the várzea, the communities established on the terra firme have always been arranged into hamlets ranging in size from five to eighty households. Since there are few ecological restrictions, houses in the terra firme hamlets tend to be more closely clustered than várzea neighborhoods. An average of ten to twenty meters separate individual houses which will often form an elongated oval around a central path. The spacing allows some privacy while still facilitating visual contact with neighbors.

Residents of all terra firme hamlets are heavily engaged in agriculture, although many members may seasonally migrate to participate in extractive activities on the várzea. In these agricultural hamlets there is a greater need for communal labor in food production. These labor needs are traditionally met through the extended family and by the temporary formation of labor exchange groups. Labor

exchange groups are sometimes known as puxirão or convite, although today they are more frequently referred to as troca de dias (exchange days) and mutirão. In mutirão, participating members give a day or two of work to another individual in exchange for future claims to labor. Usually no money is involved although the individual asking for labor may sometimes supply coffee or food to workers. The more elaborate labor exchanges described by Wagley (1976:69) which involved food and drink were not observed during the research period and may have been discontinued. Most frequently labor exchanges are organized to clear-cut gardens before planting or to build houses.

In the last ten years the rural interior has shared in the economic prosperity that was described for the town of Itá. Just as in town, the timber boom offers wage labor and cheap building supplies. As a consequence, a large portion of interior houses (100% of a non-random sample of fifty-nine homes located in two terra firme hamlets and two várzea neighborhoods) are made of sawn wood and all are raised on stilts with wooden floors. Formerly a majority of interior houses were made of palm-thatching. Prosperity is also seen in roofing materials. Within the non-random rural survey sample, 34% of households had imported ceramic tiles, brasillite, or zinc for roofs in place of the formerly ubiquitous palm-thatch. In addition, prosperity is suggested by the possession of durable consumer items. Within the sample 51% of the households had gas stoves, 68%

radios, 24% wrist watches, 29% beds (instead of hammocks), and 5% kerosene refrigerators.

Many interior communities have also benefited from the expansion of government services. Education is one of the more visible services offered. In 1948 only one rural community had a school. Today over ninety interior hamlets and neighborhoods have schools. These schools are usually one-room affairs (classes are often held in someone's home) with one teacher handling grades one to five. Books and equipment are chronically in short supply, but the mere presence of a teacher is a welcomed change. Another service now offered to the interior are vaccination campaigns by Itá's hospital. Several times a year the hospital staff, teachers, civil servants, and other volunteers venture out into the far reaches of the interior to give vaccinations for childhood diseases. This campaign is coordinated with the national campaign. Although there are many problems with transportation, finding interior residents, shortages of vaccines, and with keeping a supply of ice to preserve vaccines, the campaign is of vital importance to the health of people in the interior.

Despite these substantive and symbolic signs of prosperity there are persistent problems that lower general living standards in the interior. For one, electricity is virtually non-existent. More debilitating is the lack of access to medical treatment (beyond the vaccination campaign) due to long distances to be traveled to the town's

hospital, which can take days by canoe, and the deficiencies of the town's health care delivery system. Also, there is no treatment of drinking water which is taken from the same rivers and streams where most waste is dumped. Out-houses, which would help correct part of the problem, tend to be few in number on the terra firme and on the tidal várzea the high water tables and daily flooding make them all but useless. Furthermore, few people have the luxury of mosquito netting and therefore sleep exposed to insects. As a consequence, a resurgence of malaria in Itá (probably transported from Pará's gold mines) spread quickly among the population. Between 1984 and 1985 the number of malaria cases jumped from 7 to 180 (SESPA 1985).

Problems of availability of food in the interior, however, are not so severe as in town. For the most part food is available the year around for all but the tidal várzea areas since interior residents always have access to gardens for crops, rivers for fish, and the jungle for fruits and game. Interior inhabitants often comment about this virtue. When asked in the non-random rural individual interview schedule whether life is better in the interior or town, 50% responded the former because food is more available and one does not need money to obtain it (29% responded the interior is better because it is calmer and safer, 7% because there are more jobs, 3.5% because community aid exists, 3.5% because appearances such as clothing are not important, and 7% responded town life is

better because there are more consumer items available). Employment, likewise, is less of a problem in the interior. One can always tend a garden and work in extraction of rubber, cacao, timber, or palm-heart. The major drawback, however, is low returns for labor. Most interior inhabitants, especially those not owning land, tend to only eke out a living. These hardships, plus the attractions of town life (more people, consumer goods, electricity, entertainment, etc.) draw large numbers of people from the interior.

The description of the setting of Itá's town and interior shows in part how the municipality has changed since Wagley's and Galvão's 1948 study. Standards of living, for example, measured in terms of housing and consumer items have improved somewhat. However, problems of employment, food, health, and education remain. Other changes have been fairly modest, particularly in comparison to other parts of the Amazon. For example, in Itá there is no rapid urbanization such as has occurred in cities like Belém, Santarém, Macapá, or those along the Transamazon highway. Nor has Itá experienced massive economic development such as in Jarí, Carajás, or Macapá. And up until the present, as will be shown in Chapter Four and Five, Itá has not suffered a high level of violence over land and resources as in southern Pará. But Itá has nevertheless shared in some of the basic changes that are remolding the Amazon today. To better understand these

processes of change, the following chapter will review the historical background of Itá in order to indentify certain ecological, economic, and political structures that limit and guide contemporary change.

CHAPTER III ITA'S HISTORY

Despite both an unimpressive appearance and a relatively unimportant status within the contemporary Amazon Valley, the community of Itá stands out among its surrounding towns in terms of its long and prominent history. Itá was one of the first three European settlements established in the Amazon. It was founded as a Dutch trading post in 1609, seven years before the first Portuguese settlement was established in Belém. In the four centuries that followed, Itá's history colorfully reflected nearly every major trend occurring in the region. For example, the town played an important role in early Amazonian history as a battleground for competing European countries, a strategic military outpost, a frontier settlement, a staging ground for Indian wars and slaving raids, a site for religious missions, a site for a prison, and a checkpoint for river commerce. By the 19th century the municipality became a major supplier of raw rubber and then lost all prominence with the rubber bust and extended regional depression lasting until the mid-20th century. Finally, in the late 20th century the community became a large supplier of timber. In this chapter the history of Itá within the context of the greater Amazon Valley will be

reviewed with a focus on reoccurring themes that have shaped the development of contemporary Itá.

The Euro-Brazilian history of Itá may be divided into seven periods. Each period was marked by some political or economic event of major significance to the entire Amazon Valley. The first period involved the European conquest and early settlement period which extended from 1590 until 1652. Next was the religious mission period, 1653-1758, which was followed by the Directorate period, 1759-1799. The fourth period, 1800-1850, was the era of economic decadence and political turmoil which included the Cabanagem revolt. The fifth period was the rubber boom, lasting from 1845 to 1910. The sixth period was the rubber bust and depression which extended from 1910 to 1963. The final period was the development and integration era. This period began with the military coup of 1964 and runs to the present day. In this chapter periods one through six will be covered. The final period will be discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

The Conquest and Early Settlement Period: 1590-1652

Euro-Brazilian history in the Amazon began with the discovery of the Amazon River by the Spanish explorer Vicente Yanez Pinzon in 1500. It was not until the 1590s, however, that Europeans succeeded in systematic penetration and settlement of the region. At this point in time the Europeans generally established friendly trading relations with the numerous Amerindian tribes they encountered. These

tribes consisted of Tupi-Guarani, Arawak, and Carib speaking groups. They were organized into small (100-400 people), mobile, and highly dispersed groups subsisting by gardening, hunting, and gathering on the terra firme and into larger (500-2500), permanent, and politically complex settlements subsisting by extensive agricultural, hunting, gathering, and some animal husbandry on the várzea (Galvão 1963:215-223; Gross 1975:526; Meggers 1971:119, 122, 143). The Europeans traded tools and various trinkets to these groups for forest goods and fish.

In the forty years following European penetration of the region, the Amazon became a mosaic of conflicting claims and fledgling settlements founded by competing European nations such as the Dutch, English, French, and Portuguese. It was the Portuguese, however, who eventually succeeded in securing their claims to the region through military means. In 1621 the Portuguese established the state of Maranhão and Grão Pará to govern the region. By 1640 the Portuguese had succeeded in expelling their European rivals from the general area.

After defeating the competing European powers, the Portuguese turned their attentions toward developing a colonial economy and obtaining native Indian workers. The first intentions of the Portuguese were to develop a plantation economy for sugar cane. Toward this end there were some successes in a few select areas of Amazonia. More generally, however, agricultural production did not prove to

be very profitable, especially in comparison to other areas of Brazil.

There were two major drawbacks to plantation agriculture in the Amazon. First, poor soils, plant disease, and pests restricted yields and annual cropping on the terra firme while plant disease, pests, and European unfamiliarity with the quick growing season limited agriculture on the várzea. Second, there was a problem of obtaining workers to man the plantations. Portuguese settlers were too few in numbers while the Amerindians had few incentives to forego their own subsistence requirements and engage in extended periods of intensive agriculture for the Europeans. When forced into plantation labor, many Indians died from imported European and African diseases while others fled the oppressive conditions. Attempts to import African slaves as an alternative to the Amerindians proved unsuccessful since the Amazon was a poor colony and few Europeans could afford the costs.

Faced with the improbability of developing a productive plantation economy, the Amazon colonists turned to the extraction of forest products. Among the forest products gathered were drogas do sertão (backland drugs) which included cacao, cloves, oleaginous seeds, vanilla, annatto fruit (the pulp of the fruit is used to make a yellowish red dye), cinnamon, sarsaparilla, senna (dried leaves used for medicinal purposes, especially as purgatives), pixurim (a substitute for nutmeg), and carajuru (a bark used to make

red dye) (Sweet 1974:57; Parker 1985:7) Wood, aromatic bark, and tree cotton were also extracted (Reis 1974:34).

Extraction of drogas do sertão was vastly more cost-efficient than plantation agriculture. Extraction did not require large capital investments to clear land, tend crops, or buy machinery. All that was required were the costs of outfitting a small crew of collectors (numbering as few as three or four) and gathering a convoy of canoes (Weinstein 1983:12; MacLachlan 1973:206). There was also considerable flexibility in what was collected. If a particular good was not earning sufficient profit in an overseas market, or if a good had been depleted by earlier extraction treks, then there were always other commodities to fall back upon (Weinstein 1983:12). And finally, the work routines involved in extraction were more amenable to Amerindians which facilitated an otherwise impossible task of recruitment and maintenance of a labor force.

From the beginning the Amerindians were essential to the functioning of the extractive economy. The Indians possessed the knowledge of the diverse Amazonian ecozones which enabled them to venture into the jungle for months at a time and retrieve the scattered forest products. In addition, the Indians possessed the knowledge to hunt, fish, and produce food crops in small subsistence gardens to feed the colonists. And perhaps most importantly, the Indians were a locally available, cheap source of labor which could be remunerated far below the level of worker reproduction.

In many cases the Indians were simply enslaved. As the world demand for extractive products grew, the central importance of the Indian worker meant that increasing numbers of natives were drawn, or forced, into service for the Portuguese.

To obtain increasing numbers of Indian workers, the Portuguese resorted to various methods of obtaining forced or slave labor. At first, slaves were purchased from Amerindian groups. As the demand for workers grew, the Indian groups were encouraged to increase raids on rival groups to capture more slaves. When these increased efforts could not meet the demand, the Portuguese conducted slaving raids themselves. These slaving raids took a heavy toll on the indigenous populations. Combined with Indian involvement in European battles for control of the region and the introduction of deadly European and African diseases to which the Amerindian had no immunity (smallpox, measles, malaria, yellow fever, and even the common cold, Ross 1978:201), the slaving raids rapidly destroyed Amerindian populations within reach of the Portuguese. This depopulation of Amerindians further aggravated the labor shortage and led to more slaving raids. A cruel cycle of slaving raids, depopulation, labor shortage, and then more slaving raids was created. Due to the ferocity of the slave raids, warfare, and disease, no várzea civilization in the Amazon remained intact after only 150 years of contact with the Europeans (Meggers 1971:121).

By the time the conquest and early settlement period came to an end in 1652, the foundations were laid for several basic patterns that have shaped Amazonian history ever since. The first, mentioned above, was the steady destruction of Amerindian populations and a concomitant labor shortage. A second pattern involved the nature of the extractive economy. The predatory pursuit of profit led many colonists to overexploit and deplete local resources. Effective management or cultivation of extracted flora was minimal since it was uneconomical and seen as unnecessary (at least in the short run) for the colonists' interests. Overexploitation, however, eventually led to impoverishment of the environment and ultimately to the downfall of the economic system. In addition, the extreme emphasis given to extraction drained labor from agricultural production leading to chronic food shortages.

The third pattern involved the transformation of Amerindian societies from self-sufficient and basically egalitarian groups to an exploited and non-autonomous class (Ross 1978:193). The class system which evolved was composed of the dominant Portuguese and the subservient Indians and mestizos. The dominant Portuguese forced Indian, mestizo, and later African slave workers into commodity production in which surplus was appropriated by the former. This transformation of the Amerindians into commodity producers, plus depopulation and the resulting social disintegration led to the destruction of much of the

indigenous cultures. Included in the destruction was the loss of the accumulated knowlege about human adaptation to the multiple ecozones of the Amazon, especially the knowledge and necessary social organization required to utilize the highly productive várzea.

The Conquest and Early Settlement Period in Itá

During the conquest and early settlement period Itá played an important role as a colonial battleground, a strategic military fort, a frontier settlement, and as a staging ground for slaving raids. The first Europeans in the vicinity were Dutch mariners and traders. They established a series of three small wooden fortifications along the lower Amazon and Xingu Rivers. Itá, or Mariocaí as the Dutch called the site after the Indians living there, was the third in this series. It was founded in 1609. The Dutch traded with the Mariocaí for dye, timber, and mother of pearl. The Dutch were also interested in sugar cane cultivation along the Xingu River (Kelly 1984:25). Although the returns for these endeavors were low, the settlements supported Dutch claims to the area. Itá was particularly important since it was located in a strategic position which was believed to guard the passage to the entire upper stretch of the Amazon River (Kelly 1984:31). The settlement retained this strategic importance until the 1690s when a second, northern entrance to the Amazon was discovered.

Fourteen years after the Dutch established themselves in Itá the Portuguese arrived in the area. The Portuguese were in the middle of a long military campaign to conquer parts of Northeast Brazil and the Amazon. In their march northward the Portuguese had evicted the French from Maranhão in 1615. By 1616 the Portuguese established the town of Belém at the mouth of the Amazon River. From Belém the Portuguese sent out troops to expel the Dutch from the Xingu and lower Amazon River. In 1623 the trading post at Itá was attacked by a contingent of Portuguese soldiers and Indian archers (Kelly 1984:27; Oliveira 1983:172). The Portuguese won the battle, although the surviving Dutch fled to a nearby island. Following this victory a Dutch warship appeared in Itá. In the ensuing battle all but one of the crew members on board the ship were killed, including the English captain (Kelley 1984:27).

After the victories, the Portuguese Captain-general Bento Maciel Parente built the fort of Saint Anthony of Itá. A garrison of fifty soldiers and an unspecified number of Indians were left there under Captain Jeronimo de Albuquerque to prevent foreign powers from entering and trading in the region (Kelly 1984:28). Although the garrison was never completely successful in stopping foreign trading (especially for manatee and timber), it was successful in preventing foreign colonization attempts (Kelly 1984:48,65). One foiled colonization attempt involved an attack on an Irish and Dutch settlement called

Mandiutuba in 1625. Mandiutuba was located several kilometers to the west of Itá (Oliveira 1983:172). Some of the Dutch were survivors of the earlier trading post of Mariocaí. Itá's garrison, reinforced by fifty soldiers and 300 Tupinambá archers sent from Belém, attacked and killed between 100 and 114 of the settlers (Kelly 1984:29). Later in 1639 the garrison surprised and captured a Dutch warship near Itá (Kelly 1984:29, Hemming 1980:580,583-4). Finally, in 1697 the garrison at Itá helped repel a French intrusion into the Amazon at Macapá (Kelly 1984:69).

Beyond Itá's military role in colonial battles, the settlement also became an important staging ground for slaving raids conducted both upriver and downriver (Kelly 1984:66). The raids quickly led to depopulation in the surrounding areas. A Franciscan missionary, Friar Cristovão de Lisboa, criticized the scandalous nature of the raids and noted that by 1647 there were only domesticated Amerindians (i.e. Indians working for the Portuguese) for 100 leagues west of Belém (Kiemen 1954:56). This area approaches the vicinity of Itá. The slaves who were captured and brought to Itá were forced into extractive and agricultural labor. Although there were no records of economic production in Itá during this period, it is likely that some sugar cane, tobacco, cotton, and manioc were grown as well as drogas do sertão and timber extracted. Fish was likely dried and exported also.

In 1633 Itá was designated as a Captaincy (Kelly 1984:72). A Captaincy was a large geopolitical division controlled by the Portuguese Crown or entrusted to an individual responsible for settlement and development of the area. The Captaincy of Itá remained under the control of the Crown. At the time of its creation there were only five captaincies in the entire Amazon. Near this same time Itá also became the site of a regional prison. Since Itá was a frontier settlement, Portugal's most advanced outpost in the Amazon until 1638, it was deemed a sufficiently isolated location for a prison. Among the many prisoners incarcerated at Itá were military officers accused of illegally enslaving or mistreating Amerindians (Kelly 1984:69-70).

Due to the presence of a military garrison, prison officials, and various personnel involved with monitoring river traffic and trade, the town supported a number of individuals with the financial resources to import African slaves. African slaves, in general, were a rarity in the Amazon due to their prohibitive costs. Itá, however, had a sizable population of African slaves which grew to represent 31% of the town's population at the time of the first population census in 1783 (Kelly 1984:143). The African slaves worked as household servants and in agriculture.

By the end of the conquest and early settlement period in 1652, Itá was firmly established as a Portuguese military and colonial outpost. The community was on its way

to becoming one of the three principal Amazonian settlements of the 17th and 18th century, along with Belém and Cametá. While reaching such prominence, Itá became completely enmeshed in trends and conflicts of the following period. This period revolved around Jesuit Indian missions and the conflict between the Jesuits and colonists for control of Amerindian labor.

The Religious Mission Period: 1653-1759

By the mid 17th century the Portuguese had lost about one-half of their sugar producing region in Northeastern Brazil to the Dutch, and many of their possessions in Southeast Asia (Ross 1978:201). Faced with growing financial difficulties from the loss of colonial revenues, the Portuguese began exerting more pressure on the Amazon colony to increase its exports. The Amazon colony, however, was unable to respond. Extraction activity was declining as the more accessible resources were depleted and attempts with agriculture were demonstrating the fragile nature of Amazonian soils. But the most devastating problem was the lack of labor. Disease, slaving raids, intertribal wars encouraged by Europeans, and general mistreatment of Amerindians by colonists had reduced the availability of Indian workers. Most Amerindians cautiously avoided all contact with the colonists unless taken by force.

The Portuguese Crown had first attempted to deal with the declining economy in 1647 by freeing all Amerindian

slaves and requiring colonists to pay fair wages to those employed (Kiemen 1954:65-67). After this failed the Portuguese Crown decided to install the Jesuit Religious Order in the Amazon to oversee Amerindian populations. The intention of the Crown was to have the Jesuits secure Amerindian labor through a program of pacification (Kiemen 1954:98). With the Jesuits in charge the Crown also hoped that the settlers' brutal treatment of slaves and the decimation of Indian populations would be tempered. In this capacity the Jesuits were following a similar, but failed, attempt made by the Franciscans. The Franciscans' efforts to secure and employ Amerindian labor ended in the 1630s amid violent confrontations with colonists who resented the order's growing monopoly over Indian labor (Kiemen 1954:42; Sweet 1974:78). But the Jesuits, in contrast to the Franciscans, were a stronger order, both politically and financially, and were more adept at confronting the colonists' challenge.

The Jesuits arrived in Amazonia in 1653. By 1655 they were given complete control over all Amerindians under Portuguese control (Kiemen 1954:98). The Jesuits quickly monopolized Amerindian labor to the growing exclusion of the colonists. Without slave labor the colonists could not profitably pursue extraction and agriculture. Tension continued to mount until 1661 when the colonists rebelled against Jesuit hegemony. In 1663 the crown was forced to strip the Jesuits of their control over Amerindian workers,

although they were allowed to keep most of their missions (Kiemen 1954:119). Control over the Indians was placed in the hands of local town councils and a succession of governors. For the next seventeen years the town councils and governors feuded over control of the Amerindians while extracted commodities were depleted, slave raids continued, and Amerindian labor grew scarcer (Sweet 1974:57).

By 1680 the colony was again nearing a state of collapse. The Portuguese Crown, still desperate for colonial revenues, decided to promote export agriculture in place of faltering extraction (Parker 1985:16). To force the colonists into agriculture (particularly sugar cane cultivation) the Crown outlawed all pretenses for Amerindian slavery and returned control over Amerindians to the religious orders (Kiemen 1954:141,143). The Crown then set up a trading company to import African slaves. By limiting access to Amerindian slaves, the Crown hoped to compel the settlers to abandon extraction and use the African slaves for agriculture. Although the plan failed and extraction continued to dominate Amazonian exports, the new laws did reestablish the religious orders to their former prominence. The Jesuits in particular benefited since they still maintained the greatest number of missions in the region (Parker 1985:14).

The laws of 1680, however, left the colonists without a sufficient supply of workers. They vented their frustrations in a rebellion in the state of Maranhão in

1684. The rebellion, known as the Beckman revolt, persuaded the Crown to divide Jesuit control more evenly with the other religious orders. The colonists were also allowed to conduct slave raids, although under Jesuit supervision (Parker 1985:16). Still frustrated by these arrangements, the colonists mounted slave raids deep in the Amazon interior beyond Jesuit control. By 1691 the colonists were traveling two months upriver to find Indians (Hemming 1978:411). In a sad twist, the colonists' slave raids forced more Amerindians to seek refuge in the religious missions (Parker 1985:20). This pattern continued until 1757 when the Jesuits were expelled from all Portuguese territories.

Despite the fluctuations in power between the colonists and the religious orders during this 100 year period, the Jesuits were able to slowly increase the number of Amerindians under their control, monopolize Amazonian trade, and accumulate considerable profits from extraction and agricultural production. The key to their success was the organization of the religious mission. In the mission the Indians were concentrated, converted, and obligated to become commodity producers for miniscule wages. They worked in communally structured labor units (which helped preserve ethnic differences) and produced export commodities such as cacao, sugar cane, tobacco, cinnamon, pepper, and other forest products as well as food, fish, and game for the colonists (Parker 1985:20). This restructuring of the

aboriginal economy from subsistence production to commercial exploitation successfully separated the Indian workers from control over surplus production, which was appropriated by the religious order. In the process, the mission Indians became dependent on the missionaries for basic goods and services (Parker 1985:21). The missions were creating a group of wage earners and a demand, however slight, for manufactured and imported goods, two basic ingredients for the evolving mercantilist mode of production (Ross 1978:202). The Jesuits were also able to extend their control beyond the mission by teaching a pidgen of Tupi-Guarani languages, called lingua geral (general language), which became the trade language of the Amazon.

The mission system was the key to controlling the Amerindian once captured. However, there were continual problems of keeping sufficient numbers of Indians in the missions. In all cases the Indians in the missions were highly susceptible to deadly European diseases. Not infrequently, entire mission populations died from an infectious outbreak. In other cases Indians escaped from the missions and took refuge in the jungle. This was a common occurrence since extraction activities and even subsistence agriculture in scattered garden plots were not easily supervised and allowed the worker considerable freedom of movement.

With the passing years, replacing Amerindians in the missions became increasingly difficult. No groups

voluntarily came to the missions unless disease or slaving raids had disrupted them to the point where they could not survive autonomously. The slaving raids eventually became the only sure method of obtaining workers. However, the very success of the raids further reduced indigenous populations.

The Religious Mission Period in Itá

During the 100 years of the religious mission period Itá continued to be the site of an important fort and prison. After the French discovered the northern entrance to the Amazon river at Macapá in the late 1690s, Itá lost some of its military significance, but continued to be a major checkpoint for river trade. During this period Itá also became the site of several Jesuit and later Franciscan Indian missions. And finally, Itá also became a battle ground between religious orders, colonists, and the colonial administration for rights to Amerindian workers.

The history of conflict over Amerindian labor began with the first attempt to establish a religious mission in 1655. Prior to this date Itá had only been visited by missionaries passing through the settlement on their way upriver or downriver. In 1652, however, the Jesuits were granted permission to establish a mission in the Captaincy of Itá. The Jesuits were anxious to control the area since they felt Itá was the gateway to the Amazon (Kelly 1984:38). In 1655 two Jesuits missionaries arrived in Itá

with a reported 100 freed Indians (Kelly 1984:40). Their arrival, however, aroused hostility among the colonists who were unwilling to allow Jesuit interference in their use of Indian workers. The two priests were soon expelled from Itá with a warning not to return. When word of this action reached the Governor of the colony, reprisal quickly followed. Two perpetrators in the incident were sent to Portugal for trial and two others were exiled to the southern colony in Brazil. After the incident one of the missionaries returned and resumed work in the general area (Kiemen 1954:103, Kelly 1984:40-1).

By 1656 an Indian mission named Saint Peter was established close to the fort in Itá (Kelly 1984:42). With the mission Itá was divided into two parts: the fort and chapel of Saint Anthony serving the colonists and the mission housing the Indians. The mission was populated through Jesuit pacification efforts and by slave raids. One such slave raid took place in 1658. Itá's captain-major, accompanied by a missionary, led an expedition of 45 Portuguese soldiers and 450 Amerindians to the Tocantins River (Kelly 1984:66). There they attacked the Inheyguara Indians as punishment for past deeds. Such raids on Amerindians originating from Itá continued until the beginning of the 19th century.

By the 1660s the Jesuit presence and growing monopoly over Indian workers intensified dissent in Itá. When the revolt of 1661 began in Maranhão, the Jesuit in Itá, a

German named Betendorf, was ordered into hiding by his superiors to escape the colonists (Hemming 1978:342). He hid in the forest with sixteen Indians for several months until their food ran low. When he returned to Itá some settlers attempted to arrest Betendorf. The Captain-major of the fort, however, was pro-Jesuit and protected the priest. The principal anti-Jesuit agitators were arrested and hung after confessing to Betendorf (Kelly 1984:46; Hemming 1978:342). But in the following year Belém's town council sent a large task force to arrest Betendorf and two other Jesuits who had taken refuge at Itá. The Captain-major was unable to intervene, although some colonists tried and failed to defend the Jesuits. One colonist was killed (Kelly 1984:67). With the arrest of Itá's missionaries, all Jesuit missionaries in the Amazon Valley were in custody.

Between 1663 and 1680 the Jesuits lost political control over Indians to town councils and governors. Despite this setback, most Jesuits continued to gather catechumens. In Itá the mission of Saint Peter was left to the colonists and the Jesuits established another mission further into the interior around 1670 (Kelly 1984:47). This move was probably made to minimize the colonists' interference with mission activities. After the Jesuits regained power in 1680, conflict between the colonists and government continued. A rivalry spanning two decades

developed between the religious order and the Captain-major of the fort, Manuel Guedes Aranha. One of the first signs of this rivalry occurred in the 1680s when the Jesuits refused to send priests to minister to the local garrison and residents of Itá or to the mission of Saint Peter (Kiemen 1954:174). Later in 1687 or 1688 Aranha raided a Jesuit mission in an adjoining capitancy and apparently confiscated the Indian workers (Kelly 1984:51,52). The Indians were set up in another mission under the charge of a colonist rather than a missionary (Kelly 1984:67). The tensions created by these actions continued until 1693 when the Jesuits were forced by political decisions in Portugal to give up the mission at Itá to the Franciscans of Piety (Kelly 1984:53).

For the next sixty years tensions between colonists, government, and mission were lessened. During the same time, however, the mission system of Itá gradually declined. By 1743 the French naturalist, Charles de la Condamine, passed through Itá and commented that the only Amerindians there were the slaves of the colonists. Six years later Gonçalves da Fonseca reported that successive epidemics of smallpox and measles had eliminated the Indians at Saint Peter (Hemming 1978:445). A second mission established upstream from Itá, Saint Joseph of Arapijo, was reported to receive little attention (Kelly 1984:101).

During the period of the religious mission four important religious celebrations were established in Itá.

Two of the celebrations honored Itá's patron saints, Saint Anthony for the colonists and Saint Peter for the Indian mission. A third celebration honored Saint John. Apparently the celebrations for Saint John became more popular with the mission Indians. Bonfires were set for Saint John and the Indians performed a ritual of jumping over the fires (Kelly 1984:62). This ritual was also common in Portugal. All three of these celebrations occurred in June which marked the beginning of the dry season. In addition, the festival for Saint John coincided with the return of canoe expeditions or diligências sent to the interior to collect forest products. The members of these expeditions stayed for the celebration and took on provisions for the next trip (Kelly 1984:87). The final festival marked the end of the dry season in December. This festival honored Saint Benedict and was celebrated by Itá's African slaves. Over a period of fifteen to sixteen days the African slaves were reported to have had complete liberty and held dances and shot off fireworks (Salles 1971:185).

The Directorate Period: 1759-1799

In the first half of the 18th century Portuguese possessions in Asia continued to shrink. As before, the Amazon colony became increasingly important to Portugal. But the colony's export production still lagged behind the Crown's aspirations. Export agriculture was weak,

extraction faltered as depletion of resources continued, and Indian workers grew more scarce. Another major block to the Crown's profit making was the Jesuits. During the first half of the 18th century the Jesuits controlled much of the wealth generated by the colony to the exclusion of the Crown and colonists. The Jesuit's wealth stemmed from agricultural and extractive production on their missions, their control over a major share of Amerindian workers, and their exemption from paying taxes, granted by the Crown in 1686 (Sweet 1974:95,467; Parker 1985:22). Jesuit dominance kept tensions high with the colonists who persistently complained to Portugal about Jesuit hegemony in the colonial economic system. With increasing internal and external pressures the Portuguese Crown finally acted to break up the Jesuit stronghold in the region, as well as in other parts of Brazil. In 1755 the religious missions were secularized and in 1759 the Jesuits were expelled from the Amazon.

Jesuit expulsion came under the rule of the Marquis de Pombal (Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo). To reorder the mission system, the Marquis de Pombal used a plan called the Directorate which was designed by his brother, Francis Xavier de Mendonça Furtado. The Directorate mandated that Indians share legal equality with the settlers with no special laws to protect them (MacLachlan 1972:358). Control over the mission system was taken from the religious orders and given to an Indian village chief. To aid the chief and rationalize economic activities, colonist directors

appointed by the governor were placed in the mission along with a secular parish priest (Parker 1985:25; Kelly 1984:113). The Directors were charged with organizing forest extraction, overseeing agriculture, providing various labor levies, and generally assuring that each mission became an integral part of the regional economy (Anderson 1985:52). The Directorate was also intended to create an agricultural economy modeled on the plantation economy of the Northeast (Parker 1985:28). Incentives for agriculture were given to colonists in the form of tax relief and grants of Amerindian labor. Arrangements to import African slaves were again made. In addition, a regional trading company was formed and subsidized by the Crown to aid in transportation and trade of agricultural produce.

Despite the reorganization of the mission and incentives for agriculture production, agriculture did not prosper in most of the Amazon. Beyond ecological constraints, the major problems continued to be labor shortages and a lack of sufficient incentive to risk the less cost-effective agriculture over extraction. Part of this problem arose from the structure of the secularized missions. In the missions ubiquitous corruption enabled the colonist directors to establish dictatorial power over the village and to appropriate more labor than was legally permitted (Parker 1985:27,30). The directors allocated workers for extraction where profits were more readily made, rather than take risks with agriculture. Agricultural

efforts were further frustrated by the colonial government which took its share of Indian workers for its own projects. Attempts to import African slaves to fill the void failed as few colonists could afford the cost.

The Directorate did not succeed in improving the Amazonian economy. By 1790 the labor shortage became so acute that no sector of the economy, public or private, could secure its labor needs (MacLachlan 1973:222). This labor shortage was aggravated by epidemics of smallpox and measles as well as high rates of defection from the mission (Kelly 1984:115). Military campaigns were mounted to recapture run-away Amerindians and African slaves in the 1760s. Despite these efforts, the growing problems with the Directorate forced the Portuguese government to abandon it in 1799.

Although the Directorate lasted only forty-two years and had limited impact on the colony's economic problems, it did create long lasting changes for Amazonian society and for the remaining partially-intact Indian groups. These changes were created as the protective segregation of the Amerindians was terminated. For example, the use of lingua geral was replaced by Portuguese. Amerindians were encouraged to wear European clothes instead of traditional clothing. Houses were modeled after the small European cottage and room partitions installed to discourage communal living, which was an attempt to impose the European idea of family (Parker 1985:26; MacLachlan 1972:361). To encourage

racial intermarriage, material incentives in the form of land grants, free tools, tax exemptions, and even political posts were given to Portuguese men who married Indian women (Ross 1978:203-4, Wagley 1976:38; MacLachlan 1973:363).

Most destructive to the Amerindian cultures, however, were the new arrangements to maximize the availability of Amerindian labor. These arrangements broke up and remixed ethnic groups which were formerly segregated under the religious mission system. The new labor arrangements also destroyed the communally-structured production units which were replaced by more efficient small family units. These practices had a devastating affect on the surviving portions of aboriginal culture which were largely fragmented and lost.

Throughout the Directorate period the mission Indians worked on canoes (for transportation and trade), extracted forest products, produced fats and oils, dried and salted fish, and planted crops (Kelly 1984:116). They gradually scattered out along rivers and streams in their small family units to conduct the economic activities now unabatedly dictated by the market system and world demand (Ross 1978:206; Parker 1985:35). Geographic mobility and a loose social organization were required for this system to function. Isolation and increasing dependence on the market economy were the results. The Amerindian workers were essentially being transformed into a peasant class.

The Directorate Period in Itá

During the Directorate period the town of Itá continued to serve as an administrative center, a checkpoint for river trade, and the site of a prison and fort. Soldiers stationed at the fort were active in seek-and-destroy missions against run-away Amerindians and African slaves (Kelly 1984:162,164). In the 1790s the fort served as a base for a company of white soldiers numbering 100 and a company of racial mixed soldiers numbering 150 (Kelly 1984:164). Itá's two Indian missions also continued to function after secularization. The mission of Saint Joseph of Arapijo, renamed Saint Joseph of Carrazedo as part of the westernizing process mandated by the Directorate, was a major producer of piraracu fish, andiroba oil, and Brazil nuts in the 1760s. By the end of the Directorate, however, the populations and production of both missions declined sharply.

During the Directorate period various censuses were taken which provided information on the population and production of Itá and its missions. A census taken in 1783 classified Itá as one of twenty-one white towns in the colony of Grão Pará, which consisted of the Amazon Valley (Kelly 1984:141). A white town classification meant the settlement lacked a large number of Amerindians, although it made no reference to African slaves. The population of Itá in 1783 stood at 269 free people and 124 African slaves for a total of 393 (Kelly 1984:142). As stated earlier, the

high number of African slaves in Itá was due to the presence of individuals with above average wealth for the colony as a whole. These individuals were members of the military garrison, prison personnel, and a number of civil servants administrating the district and taxing river trade. By 1789 census data show Itá contained 295 whites, 147 African slaves, and 94 agregados for a total of 436 (Kelly 1984:151-2). Agregados were boarders or tenant farmers connected with a white family. In 1797 Itá was composed of 299 whites, 131 slaves, 15 white tenants and servants, 18 salaried Amerindians, 5 salaried mestizos, and no Indian missionaries (Kelly 1984:179).

Production data for the town of Itá was collected in 1789. Itá was reported to have produced the following agricultural crops: raw cotton, rice, cacao, coffee, manioc flour, beans, corn, sugar cane, and tobacco. In addition oils, molasses, cloth, manatee, piracuí (a type of fish), and aguardente (liquor distilled from sugar cane) were produced (Kelly 1984:167). The aguardente came from one distiller in 1789 and four distillers by 1795 (Kelly:1984:162,166). Most of the above commodities were probably produced by the African slaves. Production, however, was not consistent. There were periodic shortages of food and other commodities. For example, in the early 1760s a Father Queiros spent Holy Week in Itá. He noted that all construction work on the fort of Saint Anthony had stopped due to a lack of manioc flour (Kelly 1984:130). The

only extracted commodity recorded in the census of 1789 was cacao (cacao was also cultivated). Although extractive commodities were generally not produced in the town of Itá, the Indian missions nearby did produce extracted goods.

The Indian missions of Saint Peter and Carrazedo were also included in the census taking. In 1783 Saint Peter was classified as an Amerindian place without whites, one of nineteen in the colony. The mission was directed by a Captain-major and a Sargent-major (both colonists). The population stood at eight-six Amerindian missionaries (Kelly 1984:142). Many of these missionaries worked for the commander of Itá's fort on gathering expeditions and as fishers and hunters for other colonists (Kelly 1984:130). This practice was indicated by the 1784 census in which nineteen individuals were listed as distributed to business canoes and to the residents of Itá (Kelly 1984:145). Throughout the Directorate the mission of Saint Peter did not prosper and by 1789 was reduced to thirty-five missionaries. Of these, eleven were under the age of fifteen. In addition, fourteen whites, four African slaves, and one agregado had moved into the mission by this time (Kelly 1984:152). In 1797 the mission had forty-three missionaries (Kelly 1984:181).

The Indian mission of Carrazedo fared somewhat better than Saint Peter. It too was classified as an Indian place without whites in 1783. Two officials were in control of the mission, a Principal and a Captain. The population was

listed as 194 missionaries in 1783 which fell to 158 in 1784 (Kelly 1984:142,146). By 1789 the mission had 164 people which decreased to 127 by 1797 (Kelly 1984:154, 183). The 1784 census described the mission as possessing a church which was about to fall down, although the residents' homes were in good condition (Kelly 1984:146).

According to economic data taken between 1764 and 1767, it appears that Carrazedo played a major role in the regional production of various goods. During this time the mission was recorded as supplying 0.55% of the region's cacao (1767); 100% of pirarucú (a type of fish) and 1.9% of fine clove (1765); 19.44% of andiroba oil, used in making soap (1766); 19.33% Brazil nuts and 2.91% of estopa, a fibrous bark used for caulking (1767) (Kelly 1984:116-121). The mission also produced tobacco and manioc, the latter being exported to Belém beginning in the 1760s (Kelly 1984:174). Table 3:1 shows the commodities produced in Carrazedo between 1764 and 1782. The elimination of some of the commodities extracted by 1782 was likely related to labor shortage as well as depletion of some resources (e.g. clove and estopa). From the profits of the mission's production, the colonial commission claimed 38.57% of the total income (Kelly 1984:122).

The Depression and Revolution Period: 1800-1850

With the termination of the Directorate the Amazon entered a 50 year period of depression and political

Table: 3:1 Reported Production in Carrazedo: 1764-1782

Products	1764	1765	1766	1767	1769	1782
Cacao	X	X	X		X	X
Fine Clove		X				
Piracuí Fish	X				X	
Nuts		X		X	X	
Manioc Flour		X	X			
Andiroba Oil		X	X	X	X	
Tobacco			X		X	
Estopa				X		

Source: Kelly 1984:169.

turmoil. In part the depression was triggered by overexploitation of extractive resources and by a drop in the international market for tropical products during the first half of the 19th century. Particularly hard hit was cacao, which was the Amazon's principal export at the time (Santos 1980:28; Ross 1978:209). In addition, labor shortages following two hundred years of slave raids and epidemics in the region severely limited productive capabilities. As the depression spread, members of the rural underclass, now freed of the Directorate, found themselves barely subsisting on devalued extraction or agricultural production and increasingly controlled by a newly evolving system of debt-peonage. Near the end of this period the cumulation of depression, exploitation, and frustration led to a brutal revolt by rural cabanos (peasant metizos, Amerindians, and escaped African slaves) against the urban based elite. This revolt, called the Cabanagem, resulted in widespread warfare which crippled the region both politically and economically.

Part of the turmoil of this period was worker resistance to the evolving social relations of production. With the end of the Directorate the secular mission system of labor control was replaced by a new system centered around the commercial trading post. The trading post became the main reference point for the rural workers who were scattered about by the demands of extraction and subsistence agriculture (Parker 1985:35-6). The rural workers were

dependent upon the trading post and the market system to supply them with certain foods, tools, medicines, and industrial goods. In exchange for these goods the workers provided extracted and agricultural products. Since currency was scarce in the region throughout the 19th century, exchange was accomplished through a system of credit and debt that came to be known as aviamento in the scientific literature (Santos 1980:156). In addition, the trading post usually maintained a trade monopoly with workers which enabled the merchants to manipulate prices. This combination of price manipulation and credit control often led workers into constant debt. In many cases the exploitive system resulted in debt-peonage and conditions of bare survival for the workers (Sawyer 1979:14, Wagley 1976:38).

The aviamento system not only tied the worker to the trading post, but also tied the trading post to merchants located in Belém. Exchange manipulation between the trading post and these merchants or aviadores (suppliers) also led to indebtedness and impoverishment for the trading post owner (Ross 1978:194). The aviador firms, which were often import-export firms as well, derived the largest share of wealth from the aviamento system. In general these firms were owned by peninsular Portuguese who first established themselves as middlemen during the Directorate period (Anderson 1985:52). The aviador/import-export firms traded primarily with Europe. At this point in history the Amazon

was more closely integrated socially, economically, and politically with Europe than with the rest of Brazil. This was due in large part to the trade winds which made sea travel to Southern Brazil difficult and to the lack of overland connections southward.

During the Depression period the trading post and incipient aviamento system did not prosper. Despite this lack of prosperity, there were growing differences in wealth between the peninsular Portuguese merchants and the rural workers. Around Belém there were also growing differences of wealth between large landowners (latifundiários) producing cacao, rice, coffee, sugar, and cotton with slave labor on the one hand, and small landholders (minifundiários) and peasants on the other hand (Anderson 1985:54). These differences in wealth, the control of the economy by the Portuguese, and the intolerable debt-peonage relations increasingly experienced by rural workers helped fuel political turmoil that exploded in the Cabanagem.

The political turmoil leading up to the Cabanagem actually began among urban elite circles when Brazil declared its independence in 1822. A sizable portion of the local urban elite refused to accept independence since the Amazon still retained important commercial ties to Portugal (Anderson 1985:55). This elite faction was generally composed of peninsular-born individuals who were merchants and large landowners. They were organized into a political party called the Caramurus. A second faction consisted of

native-born individuals who were principally small scale shopkeepers, artisans, entrepreneurs, and small landholders (Anderson 1985:56). This faction was represented by the Filantropico party which favored regional autonomy or independence for the Amazon (Kelly 1984:202). Political violence between the Caramurus and Filantropicos began in 1824 in Belém. Gradually, violence escalated and by 1835 spread throughout the Amazon region.

The cabanos initially partook in the political violence as recruits of warring elite factions. However, by 1835 the struggle took on class and racial overtones. Cabanos vented their frustrations against subjugation and impoverishment by attacking the landowning rich and occasionally whites in general (Anderson 1985:70-1). Belém, which was the economic and political capital of the region, was attacked and seized by cabano forces. Several successions of cabano governments were installed. In the following year most towns along the Amazon River were endangered by local cabano uprisings (Anderson 1985:73). Despite this widespread conflict, the Cabanagem did not develop into a coherent revolution. Instead, the Cabanagem played itself out as a series of localized rebellions (Santos 1980:34; Anderson 1985:70).

In 1836 Brazilian forces under General Francisco Soares de Andreia recaptured Belém from the cabanos and six months later had pacified the remaining insurrections (Anderson 1985:76,78). By this time, however, an estimated 30,000

people out of a total population of 130,000 for the entire region had died from warfare or epidemics (Anderson 1985:80). In addition, the major plantations, sugar mills, and cattle ranches in the region had all been damaged or destroyed.

After the destruction of the Cabanagem the region began a slow recovery period which lasted until the 1850s when the Rubber Boom period began. During this recovery period many cabanos returned to extraction and agriculture activities, submitting themselves once again to the control of the trading post. Other cabanos were forced to join a Workers' Corps (Corpo de Trabalhadores) created in 1839. The Workers' Corps was maintained by the military and required all individuals who were landless or without continuous employment to work in state sponsored public works projects or to be rented out to private enterprises (Kelly 1984:252-3; Weinstein 1983:42).

The Workers' Corps was an attempt to reestablish control over workers which the Cabanagem had effectively disrupted. In particular, the Workers' Corps sought to force rural workers into agriculture where they could be closely supervised and their production regulated. Control over workers in the extractive sector, by contrast, was always precarious at best. Collection of cacao, nuts, rubber, wood, fish, and other forest products tended to create a relatively autonomous population of quasi-independent producers not subject to direct control or

coercion by elites (Weinstein 1983:42). This lack of control worried the surviving elite who were fearful of roving cabanos and the possibility of another revolt.

As with previous forced labor programs, the Workers' Corps often broke down into pseudo-slavery and was abused for the personal benefit of military commanders (Kelly 1984:176). In terms of making a sizable labor force available to elites, the Workers' Corps was a failure. There were never enough competent soldiers to patrol the immense region to gather the high numbers of resisters (Weinstein 1983:43). Due to these failures, the Workers' Corps was abolished by the 1860s.

The Depression and Revolution Period in Itá

Like the majority of the Amazon region, Itá too suffered during the depression. Several travelers passing by the town during this period commented on its backward state. For example, in 1828 an English sailor named Henry Maw reported that Itá was an important town, although he observed it was not flourishing (Kelly 1984:135). In 1842 a Portuguese Lieutenant-Colonel Antônio Ladilau Monteiro Beana noted the poor state of repair of the church, the shortage of manioc which had to be imported, the degenerate state of the military in which 436 men out of 574 had no uniforms or arms, and the misery people lived in despite the abundance their surroundings offered (Kelly 1984:262-5). In 1846 the Frenchman Francis de Castelnau mentioned Itá's

houses as being poorly constructed, the church as being very old, and the fort having some obsolete cannons. Castelnau was most impressed by the lack of food in Itá. He reported that his group were continuously followed by inhabitants begging for food (Kelly 1984:272).

Another sign of hard times during this period was the report of frequent epidemics in the town. For example, in 1823 and 1842 Itá reported violent fevers, possibly malaria, typhus, tuberculosis, yellow fever, colds, or dysentery. In 1844 107 people died in Itá from fever (Itá had 900-1000 people at the time). More outbreaks continued in 1845 and 1848 (Kelly 1984:427-29).

During the depression period Itá continued to serve as a site of the fort and prison. Possibly due to the presence of the fort, Itá was not very active in the turmoil of the Cabanagem. Itá served primarily as a refuge from the war-stricken areas (Kelly 1984:475). After the Cabanagem the military outpost served as one of the nine centers for the Worker's Corps throughout the Amazon. Itá's Corps employed 608 men in 1848 (Kelly 1984:276). The town also continued as a river checkpoint. In 1849 an inspection station was established to collect taxes on merchandise leaving the area (Kelly 1984:278). The population of the community grew throughout this period. However, Itá's growth did not keep pace with other surrounding towns. This led to a change in boundaries and the loss of control over one small town to a neighboring district (Kelly 1984:275).

The population of Itá in 1823 stood at 826 of which 327 were under the age of thirteen for boys or eleven for girls. Among the total populaton there were 248 slaves, 386 free non-whites, and 192 whites (Kelly 1984:206). Two military companies consisting of 78 militamen and 76 light infantry were stationed at the fort at the time. Itá also had one primary school teacher and one priest to oversee the town, Carrazedo, and one other small town (Kelly 1984:207,209). Carrazedo had 201 people, 148 of which were Amerindians (Kelly 1984:211). By 1828 the town of Itá was described by the Englishman Maw as one street running parallel to the river with some of the houses shaded by orange trees (Kelly 1984:234).

In 1842 the town had expanded to two streets running parallel to the river with two grassy cross streets. The Indian mission was in ruins. Only 715 people and 68 houses were listed in the town (482 free and 233 slaves). However, this listing excluded the population of Itá's interior. The military, now consisting of police guards, totaled 574. The church was described as made of mud and plaster with a tile roof. It lacked a belfrey and was in need of repair. Most of the houses in Itá were roofed with thatch except for four with tile roofs. Also in the 1842 census, Carrazedo was reported to have 157 people (Kelly 1984:259-65). By 1848 Itá grew to 1,019 people and 69 houses. Slaves accounted for 238 of the total (Kelly 1984:273-4).

Itá was recorded as producing manioc, coffee, cacao, tobacco, rice, cotton, beans, and breu (a blue dye) in the 1823 census. There was one cattle ranch on Majarí River. It contained sixteen cattle and twenty-two pigs. Manatee were harpooned, and fish caught by line, net, and fish poisoning with timbo. Game was hunted with guns and dogs. Eleven types of timber were identified for export. The district also manufactured andiroba oil, aguardente, and hammocks. There were six men using slave labor to produce agricultural goods. The rest were small farmers not employing much slave labor. Itá had six men distinguished in trade and business. They had a trade network established with the Xingu Valley and elsewhere to export sarsaprilla, clove, coffee, cacao, pirarucú (fish), and manioc to Belém (Kelly 1984:208-10). These men were likely trading post owners and/or aviadores and among the first individuals to set up the aviamento system in Itá.

The census of 1842 mentioned three medium sized landowners in the district of Itá. One was the captain of the Police Guards who owned one square league of land and had twenty-five slaves. The captain, along with other military personnel, made almost exclusive use of the Workers' Corps (which was established in 1839). The workers were used for private pursuits such as rowing, building canoes, or extracting forest products. Two other medium size landowners in Itá possessed a square league each in the surrounding area. All three produced manioc and coffee.

Fishing and hunting in the area of Itá were reported to be good and the area contained ample timber resources. Manioc production, however, did not meet consumption needs and had to be imported from the Xingu River settlements.

Interestingly, Carrazedo, which was exporting manioc to Belém at the time, did not appear to supply Itá with manioc. From Castelnau's writings in 1846, cattle were reported around the town. In town there were a few artisans which included one tailor and his apprentice, one shoemaker, one ironworker, one carpenter, and two stoneworkers. The school had eighty-four boys and seven girls enrolled (Kelly 1984:262-71).

The Rubber Boom Period: 1850-1910

By the 1850s the Amazon was beginning to recover from depression and political turmoil. The traditional landed elite had begun to reestablish themselves politically, and through programs like the Worker's Corps, were attempting to regain control over the regional labor force and develop a plantation economy. But the course of events that might have led to an agricultural economy was preempted by developments in the extractive sector. Raw rubber, which was produced exclusively in the Amazon until the 20th century, came into demand on the world market after vulcanization was discovered (1839) and innovative industrial uses for the material were developed.

By the 1850s extracted rubber surpassed cacao as the Amazon's primary export. Between 1850 and 1880 the volume of rubber export increased by 500%. Between 1860 and 1880 the value of rubber increased by 800% (Weinstein 1983:56, 70). With the development of the rubber tire industry, first with bicycles and then the automobile, rubber extraction boomed into its "golden years" between 1880 and 1910. Near its pinnacle in 1889, rubber accounted for 24% of Brazil's total exports. This export commodity was second only to coffee exports from the south (Weinstein 1983:156; Santos 1980:290). Despite several crisis years in the international market (1887-89, 1900-01, 1906-7), the rubber boom increasingly provided the Amazon with affluence never before experienced.

The most obvious signs of economic prosperity were seen in the major urban centers and in the infrastructure needed for rubber transport. In Belém, for example, several costly urban service projects were initiated (a water system, street lighting, trolley lines, and a telephone system) and a lucrative urban real estate business developed, complete with elaborate homes and public buildings built with rubber fortunes (Weinstein 1983:87). There were even a few attempts to diversify the economy by developing industry in the city (factories producing chocolate, soap, bread meal, rope, paper, etc.). But due to the Amazon's chronic shortage of labor, capital, and skilled technicians, little industrial growth was sustained

(Weinstein 1983:90). Concerning transportation infrastructure, numerous docks and warehouses were constructed for the boom. The number of steamships also multiplied as the number of major aviador houses employing them increased from eight in 1869 to forty-two in 1890 (Weinstein 1983:72).

Beyond the Amazon's new-found wealth, several other important changes occurred in the region during the boom period. First, the rising demand for rubber extraction prompted a massive immigration from the drought-stricken Northeast to remedy the historical shortage of workers in the Amazon. This immigration increased the Amazon's population by 400% (from 323,000 to 1,217,000) between 1870 and 1910 and effectively occupied vast areas in the rural interior (Santos 1980:109,115).

Second, the total domination of rubber in the economy led to a change in political control of the region from the traditional landed elite, whose interests were in agriculture, to a rising class of merchants who controlled exchange (Weinstein 1983:258). This change developed slowly as resistance to rubber extraction was strong throughout the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s (Weinstein 1983:34). By the 1880s, however, the traditional elite's interests were co-opted by the growing rubber wealth and they eventually became subordinate to the politicians sympathetic to rubber merchant elites. Along with this change the importance of landownership as a source of wealth decreased as control of

exchange relations became the key to the system (Weinstein 1983:49; Bunker 1985:67-8).

Beyond these two important changes, however, the rubber boom did not generate any significant structural changes in the region's political economy. In fact, the rubber boom perpetuated most of the socio-economic patterns established during the colonial period (Weinstein 1983:15). For example, the overwhelming emphasis on extraction once again tied up the labor force and led to food shortages. This shortage may have partly stemmed from increased immigration. Yet, even attempts to form agricultural colonies in the Bragantina area near Belém did not ease the problem.

Excesses in extraction also led to the depletion of rubber trees (Weinstein 1983:116). Rather than attempting to rationalize production, such as developing a plantation system, the rubber elite maintained productivity by simply expanding rubber extraction to areas previous unexploited, such as the Xingu and Tapajós River Valleys in Pará and eventually to Amazonas, Acre and beyond. And finally, the social relations of production and exchange functioning during this period represented only a maturation of the *aviamento* system and the familiar debt-peonage system of earlier periods.

The maturation of *aviamento* did entail some intricate articulations between the extractive and export sectors. The local trading firms or *aviadores* lacked the capital needed to increase production to supply world demand. To

obtain this capital a novel division of labor with international firms was devised. The foreign firms, largely of American, German, and English origins, specialized in exporting and arranging credit which was backed by international banks while the national aviador firms continued buying and financing rubber in the interior (Santos 1980:125-26). This union tied foreign capital to a local system capable of securing labor and logistical support to expand production. The Amazon economy, as a result, was increasingly integrated with European and North American interests.

The large aviador firms, now with foreign capital, began recruiting large numbers of workers by extending credit and goods in exchange for rubber. As extraction expanded, the aviamento relations were extended to agriculture and fishing (Santos 1980:158). Various middlemen or agents of the aviador houses appeared in the aviamento chain to help organize trade. In all, there could be six different levels through which goods and credit passed in between the extractor and rubber manufacturer (Weinstein 1983:16).

The aviamento chain was maintained by a pyramid of debt relations. At the top, export firms and international banks held considerable control over the large aviador houses through the threat of withdrawing credit. Without credit in the currency-starved economy, a business would collapse. At the lower end of the aviamento chain, trading posts owners

and landowners (seringalistas) were made virtual "slaves" to the urban merchants (Weinstein 1983:23). There was always a threat of foreclosure on debts owed that kept the trading posts and seringalistas subservient to the aviador houses.

The trading posts and seringalistas, in turn, usually kept the lowly rubber extractors in perpetual debt. Among the mechanisms the seringalistas and trading posts used to maintain debt included charging rent on land used (paid with a percentage of the rubber produced), charging transportation costs and sales commission for the service of selling the rubber in Belém or Manaus (often 50% of the market value of rubber), charging a commission for cash (20%) or goods (10%) received by the extractor, setting local prices (inflating imported goods up to 10 times over prices in Rio de Janeiro in the more isolated portions of the Amazon and devaluing the rubber exports), controlling credit sources, and outright cheating of illiterate collectors on their accounts (Weinstein 1983:16, 18, 22, 49; Santos 1980:170).

Due to such manipulation of exchange, many 19th century observers of the rubber trade commented that the patrão (merchant, landowner, or simply patron) gained as much from the "sale" of goods as from the profits of the rubber trade itself (Weinstein 1983:22). Rubber extractors were forced to endure such exploitation due to their isolation and the monopoly held on trade by the seringalista or trading post (Weinstein 1983:22). This monopoly was so complete and

centralized in most inland parts of the Amazon that it was rare for goods produced in one municipality (like manioc or salted fish) to be sold in another without first passing through an aviador's home base in Belém (Weinstein 1983:55).

When a trading post or seringalista advanced credit to a particular extractor, a patron-client bond was created. The bond was an unequal, paternalistic, dyadic social relationship. The bond carried certain duties and responsibilities for the patrão and subordinated freguesa (client). For example, ideally the patrão would maintain personalistic ties to workers and protect and intervene on their behalf in dealings with the outside world. Patrões (plural of patrão) advised the family on social and economic matters, helped obtain health care in times of need, and made loans. The bond could even be reinforced by fictive kin ties (compadrazco). In this situation a patrão would serve as a godparent (padrinho) to a freguesa's children, usually at baptism. As a godparent the patrão was responsible for overseeing a child's development, possibly helping with the education and certainly supporting the child if the parents died.

In return for a patrão's responsibilities in the patron-client bond, freguseas were obligated to sell rubber only to the patrão as long as they had debts or resided on the patrão's land. They were also expected to accept the inevitable price manipulations of the patrão and, if

eligible to vote, give political support to the candidate of the patrão's choice. With fictive kin ties, these responsibilities were strengthened further. Although the patron-client relationship could appear quite personal and benevolent at times, especially with fictive kin ties, it was still based on an unequal tie of debt which led to economic exploitation, oppression, and even violence (Weinstein 1983:181).

The extent to which the trading post or landowner could use this debt to control workers, however, varied by region and time. In general, the further the rubber extractors were from Belém, and the closer the period was to its end in 1910, the greater was the control and exploitation of workers. At worst, exploitation consisted of debt-slavery in which the rubber tappers' mobility was controlled, the right to grow their own food prohibited, conditions of hunger and disease widespread, and socio-political subservience entrenched. However, this scenario was probably not the norm for the region. The very nature of gathering, which required a highly dispersed and mobile population, mitigated against extreme forms of regimentation and control.

In fact, rubber tappers often had some control over their working conditions (when and how hard to work), had access to the means of subsistence (land, game, forest products), and their mobility allowed them opportunities to evade intolerable demands (Weinstein 1983:14). In the lower

Amazon a history of small landownership even enabled many tappers to work their own rubber trails and produce food which allowed them to stay out of permanent debt to merchants. And finally, in all but a few cases, rubber extractors could mitigate the extremes of the aviamento system by secretly selling rubber to "pirate traders" (regatões which were itinerate river boat traders), hiding rocks or other items in rubber pelles (balls) to increase the weight and price received, engaging in forbidden subsistence activities, refusing to stay in the rubber field in the rainy season, and ultimately, breaking debt relations by fleeing the area (Weinstein 1983:102).

By the close of the rubber boom in 1910, the "peasant-like" lifestyle which first appeared in the late 18th century was firmly in place (Parker 1985:37). The semi-independent, semi-market oriented rural workers emeshed in a rigid class system structured around exchange and debt became the dominant actors in the region. The rural workers syncretized Amerindian and Iberian knowledge for a unique world view which became the basis for the evolving Amazônida (non-Indian Amazonian) culture. The strength of this adaptation was demonstrated when the Northeastern migrants and many of the Portuguese migrants that entered the region during the boom adapted this evolving Amazônida culture.

The Rubber Boom Period in Itá

During the rubber boom period Itá shared in the prosperity of the region. With rich stands of rubber trees located on the islands and várzea surrounding the town, the people of Itá were quickly drawn into extraction as the price of rubber rose. In the early years of the boom Itá was one of four municipalities that produced the majority of rubber for the entire Amazon region (Weinstein 1983:52). As new rubber fields in the Xingu and Tapajós River Valleys were opened, Itá's share of regional rubber production declined. But the municipality continued producing significant quantities of rubber throughout the period. Even by the 1900s, when overproduction had reduced the output of most trees by one half to one third (Weinstein 1983:169), Itá still received considerable revenue from extraction.

In the early years of the rubber boom Itá began to show some signs of rejuvenation from the previous years of stagnation. For example, in 1854 a postal agency served by a newly formed steamship line was opened (Kelly 1984:298). The town also grew to a total of 2,027 inhabitants (1,870 free people, 320 slaves, and 17 foreigners) in 1856, then increased again to 2,779 people (2,563 free people, 15 foreigners, 216 slaves) in 1872 (Kelly 1984:308,346). In 1857 Itá became one of seven independent judicial Comarcas (judicial division) in Pará and one of twelve districts

with a municipal judge (Kelly 1984:312). The community also maintained its school and parish priest (Kelly 1984:301).

Despite these various developments, Itá's appearance remained one of neglect. A description of the town in 1852 by two American naval officers characterized Itá as a village of one street in which there was a great demand for salted fish (Kelly 1984:296). Records of the collections from the inspection station (1852-3) showed diminishing revenues (Kelly 1984:299). The town council, lacking a public building, had to rent a private home to hold meetings (Kelly 1984:303). In 1859 the town council sent a report to Belém which stated, "in this municipality, all that exists made by the hand of man is a small chapel serving as the main church which is nearly annihilated, and the foundations of a ruined fort" (Kelly 1984:313).

By 1860 things had not improved much. In that year Pará's provincial president, Dr. Antônio Coelho de Sá e Albuquerque, visited Itá and confirmed the decay of the fort and noted the deteriorated condition of Itá's military garrison's arms (the garrison consisted of four companies and 535 soldiers and 25 reserves in 1855, Kelly 1984:303, 319-20). The once important regional prison of Itá was reported to have been reduced to a filthy lean-to lacking facilities or security. The president was also critical of the neglected state of agriculture. He commented that only the abundance of naturally growing products along the river

banks kept the province from abject poverty (Kelly 1984:317).

Many of these above reports describing Itá's "backward" state also mentioned the growing importance of rubber extraction. As early as 1852 the town's commerce was reported to be dominated by rubber (Kelly 1984:297). In 1860 when President Sá visited Itá he noticed that whole blocks of houses were abandoned by the owners who were in the interior collecting rubber (Kelly 1984:317). President Sá, like many of the traditional elite, was highly critical of rubber extraction. He felt extraction blocked economic progress by scattering the population and drawing labor away from agriculture.

Despite criticism of rubber extraction by elites, the rising price of rubber increasingly attracted able bodied workers in Itá. A pattern of seasonal migration to extract rubber in the dry season (when rainwater would not interfere with latex collection) on Itá's islands and várzea left the town all but deserted for six months a year. Nearly every occupation was affected by the labor drain. For example, the five animal-powered aguardente factories/mills operating in 1862 experienced frequent shut down periods due to a lack of workers (Kelly 1984:326). Even salaried professionals, like school teachers, were drawn to the quick returns of rubber collection (Kelly 1984:321). Agriculturalists in particular reduced production or abandoned their gardens to partake in the rubber boom. This

created increased food shortages and forced the community to become even more dependent on expensive imported foods.

Census records of rubber export from Itá are shown in Table 3:2. Between 1865 and 1900 rubber export increased nearly twenty-four fold. During the same time Itá exported animal pelts, tanned hides, deerskins, cacao, nuts, capaiba oil, sarsaparilla, and tobacco (Kelly 1984:342), although these commodities took on increasingly minor roles in the economy as the rubber boom progressed. In 1862 there were also twelve cattle ranches with a total of 6,548 head of cattle and horses. The ranches employed thirty-nine free workers and seven slaves (Kelly 1984:326).

As the rubber boom entered its "golden years" (1880s-1910), Itá finally began to show signs of prosperity. Portuguese and Northeastern immigrants swelled the urban and rural population. Twenty general stores were opened in town to handle the increased commerce (Wagley 1976:46). Warehouses for rubber lined the river front. Several gambling houses and a house of prostitution were opened. Rubber wealth was also lavished on the construction of a huge town hall, on a gas (carbide) lighting system for the streets, on stairs down to the river faced with imported marble slabs, on extravagant iron work cemeteries, and even on shirts sent to be starched in Portugal (Wagley 1976:49, 51). According to a weekly newspaper printed between 1909 and 1910 (Correio de Itá), Itá became an active social

Table 3:2 Rubber Production in Itá: 1865-1910

Year	Production in Kilos
1865	23,140
1900	552,989
1910	408,124

Source: Kelly 1984:342; Weinstein 1983:190).

center. There were banquets, balls, and birthday parties complete with champagne, wines, fine foods, and orchestra music (Wagley 1976:47).

In the rural interior strong merchants arose with the rubber trade. Many of these merchants were of Portuguese descent, while at the turn of the century a large population of Moroccan and Spanish Jews came to dominate much of Itá's commerce (Kelly 1984:378; Wagley 1976:48). As their commercial power grew these rural based merchants (particularly the Portuguese) were able to contract directly with aviador houses in Belém to deliver goods to their stores on the Great Island of Itá and along the bigger rivers on the south shore of the Amazon. With their wealth they also began acquiring large tracts of land on Itá's várzea (where the rubber trees were concentrated). Land concentration was accomplished legally by purchase or foreclosure, or by other means including invasion and intimidation.

Yet, a latifundiário or large landholding class did not develop in Itá as it did in many neighboring municipalities. As indicated by the 625 land title registrations recorded between 1890 and 1910, most landholdings were a quarter or a half league in dimension (between one and four kilometers). In terms of rubber trails possessed (one rubber trail on the average contained 100 individual trees), only 1.5% of land registrations recorded over 100 trails while 61% reported 10 or under. In

Amazonian terms, a landholding of 100 trails was considered a relatively large estate while 10 trails or less were usually owned by a family of humble origins (Weinstein 1983:172). The reason why Itá did not develop a latifundiário pattern was due to the early entry into rubber extraction by many small and medium size landowners before the large aviador houses gained sufficient power to appropriate land (Weinstein 1983:47).

One consequence of Itá's land tenure structure was the general absence of extreme debt-slavery abuses of workers such as those reported in other areas. Nevertheless, there were abuses by landowners (seringalistas) who refused to allow their workers to plant crops. The custom of expelling workers from land when they were caught trading rubber to regatões or spending too much time on subsistence activities was also practiced. And almost ubiquitously, merchants manipulated trade which left the rubber tappers in persistent poverty. As in all of the Amazon, rubber profits seldom trickled down to the lowly extractor (Weinstein 1983:70). Yet, a combination of Itá's history of small landownership, its proximity to Belém for trade, and the availability of unclaimed terra firme for agricultural production insured that many Itaenses (people from Itá) had access to land, food, and alternative trade which aviadores and seringalistas could not monopolize as they did in more remote areas of the Amazon.

With the Golden Era of the rubber boom, the dominant class of Itá (merchants, large landowners, and some government officials) took on airs of an aristocracy. They were referred to as gente de primeira classe (people of the first class). Social deference between the upper class and people of lower status was marked and enforced. Socially subserviant to the upper class was the working class (gente de segunda or second class people) which was composed of poor town dwellers, farmers, and extractors. They showed deference to the elite by never sitting down in their presence and always using the formal term Seu (short for senhor or mister) or Senhora (mistress) when addressing or referring to them. Even parties had separate rooms for the aristocracy and lower classes (Wagley 1976:103).

During the rubber boom period several cultural traditions which originated in earlier years became firmly institutionalized. One major tradition was the religious festival cycle. This cycle revolved around the two major festivals of Saint Anthony (June) and Saint Benedict (December). Saint Anthony was the town's patron saint and also the favorite saint of the dominant class. Saint Benedict was the protector of river travelers, rubber tappers, and guardian of the poor in general. The festivals were held at the time of seasonal changes between the dry and rainy seasons rather than following the Church calendar for the saints' days. They were organized by religious

brotherhoods (irmadades) and presided over by the resident priest (if Itá had one at the time) or a visiting priest.

The saints' festivals lasted nine days during which there were nightly religious services (novenas) which culminated with a religious procession on the final day. During the procession a statue of the saint was carried through the streets of town, often accompanied by fireworks and waving banners. A statue of the saint was often carried to the interior where it was taken door to door while the irmadades asked for donations (Wagley 1976:198-9). For Saint Benedict there was also a procession by boats in front of town (meia lua or half moon).

Commensurate with the religious celebrations were nine days of parties, dancing, music and drinking. Profits made from rubber extraction were spent at this time. To take advantage of the concentration of people and the flow of money, many small scale merchants from Belém set up stalls to sell wares. With the onset of the boom period the festival of Saint Benedict became the most important in Itá since the saint was recognized as the protector of the rubber tapper and also because it coincided with the end of the rubber harvest (just before the rains began) when a year's profits were at hand. By the peak of the rubber boom the festival of Saint Benedict had overshadowed the celebration of the town's patron saint, Saint Anthony, as well as the other summer festivals of Saint Peter and Saint John.

The Rubber Bust and Depression: 1910-1963

By 1910 the rubber boom was at its zenith. The price for rubber reached an all time high and the Amazon continued to enjoy a near monopoly on the world's rubber supply. But the extraction system which had evolved was destructive to the trees, costly in terms of productivity, and not capable of keeping up with world demand. As early as the 1890s these limitations had motivated foreign nations reliant on Amazon rubber to experiment with more cost-efficient systems of production. The English, for example, began to experiment with rubber plantations in Ceylon using rubber seeds taken from Brazil by Henry Wickham Steed (Santos 1980:230-233, 256). After twenty years of effort, rubber plantations were successfully established in Malaya, Ceylon, India, Burma, Borneo, Siam, and the Dutch West Indies. By 1910 the plantations first produced a sizable quantity of rubber, 8% of the world market (Santos 1980:236; Weinstein 1983:215). Since labor was cheap and productivity higher as trees were concentrated in one area, the Asian plantations soon outproduced and undercut the price of rubber from the Amazon.

Up until this point the Brazilians had done little to develop a plantation system for rubber. There were persistent warnings by noted elites, including many Provincial Presidents of Pará, that a failure to plant rubber trees would lead to eventual collapse of the rubber economy. Yet, even as the English began to experiment in

Asia there was no change in the extractive economy. This resistance to plantation rubber was due in part to financial weaknesses in the economy. For example, capital formation among the local dominant class remained quite modest, especially in comparison to capital formation in the south of Brazil. The Amazon elite did not have large reserves of capital to invest in plantations. Also, the central Brazilian government, which had tenuous ties at best to the Amazon, was uninterested in financing any research and development of plantations. Nor were regional banks interested in extending long term credit needed to develop plantations (Weinstein 1983:77).

Secondly, the huge profits gained through exchange enabled the merchants, not the landed class, to become the dominant class. With such an unique elevation to dominance, it is little wonder why the merchant class was not enthusiastic about investing in rubber plantations which would likely diminish their privileged position (Weinstein 1983:224). And finally, the Amazon's world monopoly on rubber production and the vast stretches of still untapped rubber trees did little to instill a sense of urgency to convert to a plantation system.

By the second decade of the 19th century the folly of the extraction system became crystal clear. In 1913 the Asian rubber production equaled the Amazon's production and by 1919 the Asian plantations controlled 90% of the market (Santos 1980:236). As the Asian plantations began producing

the price of rubber plummeted from US \$3.00/lb. in 1910 to \$0.60/lb. in 1915 and \$0.19-0.23/lb. by 1923 (Ross 1978:215). The effects of the price collapse had a devastating impact on commercial establishments. By 1913 forty-seven aviador houses had gone bankrupt along with a host of other businesses associated with trade (Weinstein 1983:232). The speed with which so many companies failed was a sign of the very fragile nature of the aviamento system. Most of the assets of aviador houses consisted of uncollectible debts which during the boom assured the company of a sizeable clientele, but during the bust amounted to nothing (Weinstein 1983:234). As the rubber bust destroyed the commercial community, it also devastated local banks, the urban real estate market, and the public utilities of the major cities (Santos 1980:239).

By 1915 the bust had become a generalized economic depression. The merchant elite began to disperse. Some of the merchants returned to Portugal while others migrated to the South. The majority, however, stayed in the region, lowered their standards of living, and engaged in local trade on a much reduced scale (Weinstein 1983:236). The foreign export houses began to disappear. Their functions were picked up by independent regional firms who bought reduced amounts of rubber in addition to Brazil nuts, cacao, timber, and rosewood. The rise of these regional firms also spelled an end to the aviador houses which specialized only in commerce in the interior. These operators became

redundant as the native export houses were quite capable of running the exchange networks in the interior (Weinstein 1983:238). Interestingly, the new regional firms continued using the old *aviamento* system, allowing it to persist throughout the decline years (Santos 1980:243).

Despite the depression the Amazon economy continued to struggle along. In a few sectors such as ranching, importing, and manufacturing there was even some expansion. This growth occurred as labor and small amounts of capital were freed from the rubber trade and as international competition declined (Weinstein 1983:255). There were also further attempts at agricultural development in the Bragantine area east of Belém between 1914-16. As with earlier efforts, these attempts were limited by the traditional problems of soil depletion after five to ten years of crop production (Weinstein 1983:252, 255).

In 1924 the Ford Motor company attempted to develop a large rubber plantation on the Tapajos River at Fordlândia and Belterra. Despite planting several million trees and investing in substantial infrastructure, the venture failed. Ford's problems were two-fold. First, concentrating trees increased the likelihood of disease and pests destroying large stretches of the plantation. A possible solution to this problem was to develop a pest-resistant variety of tree, but this proved too costly. Second, despite relatively high wages, the plantation could not fix labor to the land. A constant labor turnover resulted which was

likely due to the inability of pure capitalist social relations of production to successfully compete with non-capitalist alternatives. For example, wage labor could not compete with patron-client relationships for long term security. Nor could capitalist relations improve upon a lifestyle where the worker had direct access to the means of production (land). Without coercion, there was no way of forcing workers to accept long term capitalist relations.

In the 1930s Japanese migrants created several settlements in the Amazon. The Japanese introduced jute (a fibrous plant used to make rope) which became an important commodity until synthetic substitutes lowered its price. Later on the Japanese introduced black pepper which also became an important export crop (Bunker 1985:73).

Beyond the various activities listed above, the Amazonian economy generally suffered a sharp decline. With the low rubber prices, extraction efforts were redirected toward collection of a mixture of Brazil nuts, rubber, oleaginous seeds, and other forest commodities. In 1921 Brazil nuts overtook rubber as the region's most valuable export (Weinstein 1983:258). Cultivation for manioc, rice, and bananas and extraction of fish, turtles, and manatees took on greater importance in local trade. There was also a growing market for animal hides such as caiman and jaguar which peaked during the 1950s (Bunker 1985:73).

In the interior the economic decline led to abandonment of many rubber trails and to migration of workers. Many of

the Northeasterners recruited to work in the Amazon returned home (Santos 1980:261). Those who remained joined with the native rural workers in diversifying their economic activities. More time was spent in food producing activities such as gardening, hunting, fishing, and collecting. This ability to have access to land after the bust (land per se had little value at this point) cushioned the decline of rubber tappers. Massive starvation, epidemics, or insurrections did not occur (Santos 1980:278). Rather the tappers standard of living slipped only incrementally. While more time was spent in subsistence production, most individuals also continued extracting forest goods for the market. Although the prices for rubber and other commodities were low, most individuals needed some income source to pay for industrial goods they had grown accustomed to (firearms, cloth, housewares, medicines) and for supplementary food (Weinstein 1983:246).

The economic decline generally affected the seringalistas and trading posts owners more seriously. Many were reduced to conditions bordering on poverty indistinguishable from the extractors. Many landowners sold their land at low prices and moved on. Many trading posts closed down as they lost access to aviador houses (which closed down), had aviadors foreclose on debts owed, or simply lost the ability to extend credit to freguesas. For the seringalistas and trading posts which managed to survive, the ability to do business and generate credit for

freguesas was greatly reduced. Without sufficient credit, debt relations and patron-client relations were weakened and the ability to control workers was diminished. As a result, worker mobility increased. Most patrões were forced to endure this loss of workers while relying on strengthened paternalistic relationships to secure the labor of those workers who remained (Weinstein 1983:245). By the 1920s and 1930s patron-client ties and the aviamento system had been stabilized, albeit in a much weaker form, and the system continued to struggle along.

The depression period continued uninterrupted until 1942 when world events briefly created a demand for Amazonian rubber. World War II was raging and one of the casualties was the rubber plantations of Malaya. The Japanese had overrun the plantations and had halted the export of rubber to the West. In desperate need of rubber for the war-time effort, the United States turned to the Amazon. In an agreement with the Brazilian government known as the "Washington Accords," the United States began financing the revival of rubber extraction. Under the program migrants from the Northeast were brought in to reopen rubber trails. Also a regional health program, SESP (Superintendência de Saude Pública or Department of Public Health) was established to oversee the health of the workers. With this increased activity and the rising price for rubber, the Amazon experienced a mini-boom during the next few years.

The war-time rubber boom ended up having to rely on the remnants of the old aviação system since it was an already-established financial and logistical system. But the limitations of aviação (wasteful and costly) as well as the limitations of natural extraction (low productivity) constrained wartime production to an increase of only 32% between 1940 and 1944 (Wagley 1976:54). This failure led the United States to abandon the Washington Accords by 1945 when the Malayan plantations were liberated from the Japanese and the cheap Asian rubber reentered the world market. Without American financing, Amazonian rubber production slipped back into its former depressed state. The mini-boom was over. The only lasting influence of the boom was the establishment of SESP. The Brazilian government took over the program in 1945 and has continued it until today.

Despite the return of the depression following the war, the Amazon region was not to be ignored by the Brazilian state as it previously had been. There were public and private interests stirring to integrate the area with the rest of Brazil and to tap the rich resources of the region. For example, in 1940 Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas called for a "March to the West" to populate and develop Brazil's vast interior regions, including the Amazon. By 1946 a long-term development policy for the Amazon was being proposed and funds approved by the federal government. By 1953, after planning and bureaucratic delays, the plan was

ready for implementation (Mahar 1979:6). At that point the Brazilian national assembly created the Superintendência do Plano de Valorização Econômica da Amazonia (Amazon Economic Valorization Plan Superintendency) or SPVEA which was charged with development of the entire region. Among SPVEA's lofty goals were to make the region self-sufficient in agricultural foodstuffs, to expand the production of raw materials for export and internal use, and to improve transportation, communication, and energy production (Mahar 1979:8).

These ambitious plans for SPVEA, however, were never completely implemented as funding allocated for the Amazon was diverted to the industrializing south and to the building of the new federal capital in Brasília. The agency was also hampered by bureaucratic restrictions. Due to these problems SPVEA's impact on the region from 1953 to 1964 was largely limited to the building of the Belém-Brasília highway (1959), the financing of few major industries, and administration of financial support for scientific research (Mahar 1979:10; Moran 1983:72).

By the late 1950s and early 1960s the overall depression in the Amazon was further complicated by runaway inflation. Triple-digit inflation greatly diminished ability to consume industrial products in the region. The aviamento system was put under increasing strain. Merchants adjusted by marking-up prices higher than usual and requiring credit payment at month's end or interest would be

charged. The high prices, however, greatly reduced consumption and severely limited the profits made from importing goods. As a result, many trading posts closed leaving growing numbers of freguesas without access to patrões, credit, food, and industrial goods. This breakdown in aviamento helped fuel a continuous out-migration from the rural interior to a few urban centers like Belém and Manaus (Ross 1978:216). With the completion of the Belém-Brazília highway, many people continued their migration southward to cities in the Northeast and South.

The Rubber Bust and Depression in Itá

The rubber bust and extended depression hit Itá fairly hard. The community had grown to depend almost exclusively on rubber revenues and once these were gone, the town quickly deteriorated. The population of the town dwindled to 300 people by 1920 (Wagley 1976:51). Many of the strong commercial families moved out of the town. Their lands were often sold at very low prices or simply left for their freguesas to tend. Warehouses and houses were left to decay. The extravagances of the town hall, gas lightening system, and marble steps were left unfinished, broken-down, or simply removed. A writer for Belém's Folha do Norte newspaper, who visited Itá in 1929, labeled the town an "ex-city" due to its degenerated state (Wagley 1976:52).

In the interior many rubber extractors left the seringais (rubber fields) for other areas. Many small

landholders lost their land and moved away. Like the seringalistas they sold out at extremely low prices to the few merchants that weathered the bust. The people of Itá tell of others who lost their land to unscrupulous Portuguese traders through a process known as apinhoar. The traders would pressure a client to accept essential and nonessential goods on credit and use their land as collateral on the payment to be made later. Due to the depressed times, the client rarely came up with the inflated payment, so the trader would take a piece of land instead. Many Portuguese merchants secured huge tracts of land in this way.

As Itá's economy entered the depression, it continued exporting rubber at very low prices. In addition, cacao, andiroba and acuuba oil and seeds, fruit, some wood, and hides were traded. The aviadores continued to come in both steamships and sailboats. But their numbers and frequency of visit were reduced. The trading posts in the town and interior continued also, although their numbers were reduced and stocks limited. Because of this break-down in the aviamento system, food shortages became more common in town. People talk of the years of misery and of many people going hungry. This scarcity persisted despite an increase in subsistence agriculture. The problem was the lack of an internal market to distribute food produced in the interior. Nearly all commerce was handled through the aviamento chain which diverted goods to Belém. In fact, it was somewhat rare for manioc produced on Itá's terra firme to be taken

to Itá's islands to be sold. Manioc for the island workers most frequently came from Belém or the Xingu River, when it arrived at all.

Due to the depressed times and lack of work in Itá throughout the 1920s and 1930s, many young men began temporary or seasonal migrations to search for employment. River transportation was fast and cheap so many ventured far. Among the jobs people reported working were with cattle in Victoria on the Xingu, in agriculture on Japanese colonies in Monte Alegre, with rubber at the plantation system attempted at Fordlândia and Belterra on the Tapajós, with Brazil nuts on the Trombetas, with jute in Almerím, and subsistence agriculture and rubber in Orixímina. Many men returned after only a few months of work. They stayed in Itá until they found suitable employment or subsistence activity or until their money ran out, in which case they would travel to find wage labor anew.

Not all migration was on a temporary basis. Throughout the depression period individuals migrated permanently to larger urban centers within and outside of the region. Others left to more prosperous rural areas where they worked in rubber, timber, jute, cattle, Brazil nuts, agriculture, and numerous other activities. The affects of this migration on some interior communities was overwhelming. One example was the village of Paraíso (Paradise) located several kilometers downstream from Itá. During the 1920s

to 1940s Paraíso was a active settlement. There were over two hundred families located around a booming trading post. One family, the Mendoça Lemes, owned over 88,000 hectares upon which there were supposedly 1800 rubber roads, or approximately 180,000 rubber trees. Contracted steamships from Belém stopped and spent days loading rubber, cacao, hides, fruit, and wood for fuel. Only the strongest trading posts could arrange to have a ship stop to trade. This level of prosperity even earned Paraíso a place on most regional maps. But as the depression years wore on and hardship for both the trading post and workers took its toll, the settlement was slowly deserted. By the 1970s the once booming settlement of two hundred families was reduced to one small trading post with few houses in the immediate vicinity.

When the World War II rubber boom began in 1942, the fortunes of Itá improved. There was an influx of people to work abandoned rubber trails sponsored by the Washington Accords. This immigration increased the municipality's population by 75% in ten years (7,081 in 1940 to 12,419 in 1950, IBGE 1940, 1950). The town of Itá grew slightly to nearly 500 people in 1948 and reached more than 600 in 1950 (Wagley 1976:58). People tell of boat loads of Cearenses and Maranhense (from the states of Ceará and Maranhão) arriving in Itá. Some ships unloaded passengers while others continued on. Many people in Itá considered these

Northeasterners to be wild and dangerous people, quick to anger and to pull a knife in a fight.

Higher prices for rubber and other extracted goods during the war years led to modest levels of prosperity. The several solvent trading posts expanded business and consumption of imported manufactured goods increased. The municipality was able to tax rubber and oleaginous seed exports which allowed them to finally complete the town hall begun in 1910, repair the public dock, build several public houses, and to pay workers to weed the streets of town from time to time (Wagley 1976:57). The municipal government, however, overextended its funding which left the municipality in debt for years to come. The increased interest by the federal government during this time also led to the establishment of a SESP health post in town and the building of seven schools in the municipality (Wagley 1976:57). Charles Wagley's first visit to Itá in 1942 was in association with the health post. There was even a telegraph station in town for awhile and a PBY seaplane of Panair do Brasil stopped once a week on its route between Belém and Manaus. And finally, from gifts accumulated from rubber workers and other devotees of Saint Benedict, Itá's church was repaired (Wagley 1976:57-58).

Once the mini-rubber boom had ended in 1945, Itá returned to its depressed state. The town lost its telegraph station and the number of river boats visiting the community dwindled. In a three month period in 1948 only

twelve river steamers stopped to deliver mail, merchandise, and to load extracted commodities (Wagley 1976:58). Some people left the municipality while those remaining returned to a mix of subsistence and extractive activities. The economy continued to revolve around rubber, despite the drop in prices. According to the 1950 census, rubber was Itá's primary export by volume, 904 tons extracted, followed by 223 tons of ucuuba seeds, 37 tons of cacao, 21 tons of murumuru, and less than 1 ton of timbó. Also exported were 10,548 cubic meters of wood (IBGE 1950). In the 1950s and 1960s there was also a modest market for alligator skins followed by a demand for spotted cats furs and some experimentation with jute planting.

By the mid 1950s SPVEA began operating. But for the municipality of Itá the affects of SPVEA were limited. There was little change in the extractive oriented economy, only limited improvement in transportation and communication, and no reform in the agricultural sector. Agricultural production, in particular, continued as an adjunct to extraction due to the near absence of an internal market and lack of incentive to plant. People living in the town and people living on the tidal várzea were forced to import food. In general, survival during this period, "hung in a delicate balance between starvation and bare subsistence" (Wagley 1968:300).

By the 1960s Itá had changed considerably, although not necessarily for the better. An increase in rural-urban

migration increased the town population to over 1000 people by 1960. To accomodate the population increase, Itá expanded to four streets running parallel to the river with a fifth taking shape in 1962 (Wagley 1968:299). Among the motives for rural-urban migration were "push" factors such as the depressed extractive economy, low returns for agricultural production, and failure of a large number of trading posts which severed rural workers' access to imported goods and credit. There were also "pull" factors such as better access to imported commodities and the improved educational, health, and recreational facilities in town. Other attractions were electricity (six hours a day) and the general movimento (movement) or bustle of town life which included gossip, political campaigns, noise of radios, and daily commercial activities (Wagley 1968:299).

Once the rural migrants reached the town of Itá, however, they found few jobs. Itá had no industry and the municipal government employed no more than thirty or forty people. There was a five kilometer road opened into the interior on which rural migrants were planting gardens and sending their produce to town with the municipality's truck and jeep. But productive land was limited and became increasingly scarce as Itá's prosperous families appropriated larger areas and placed sharecroppers on it (Wagley 1968:300). As a result of limited employment and/or subsistence opportunities, many rural families continued migrating to other towns and cities.

A second major change in Itá during the 1960s resulted from triple digit inflation. Inflation, combined with devalued prices for extracted commodities, undermined most merchants' ability to extend credit. Increasingly, trading post owners and regatões found that the value of the debts repaid by freguesas within one to three months did not equal the inflated costs of procuring new merchandise. As a consequence, the stocks of many trading posts were depleted with little or no reserve capital to buy more goods.

Faced with this situation, the trading posts and regatões had to start refusing to sell goods on credit (which meant a loss of their freguesas), to sell on credit but raise prices sharply, or to go out of business. The stronger commercial establishments managed to survive through various combinations of price increases and credit limitations (Wagley 1968:301). But for approximately 40% to 50% of the trading post, going out of business was the only option. Trading post failure was particularly prevalent in the interior. For example, on the Mojú River (Great Island of Itá) there were five active trading posts in the 1940s which were reduced to three by the 1960s. During the same time period on the Mararú River (Great Island of Itá) five trading posts were reduced to three and on the neighboring Murupucú River there were two reduced to one.

With the return to depression the highly visible class system once prominent in the rubber boom had lost many of its outward signs. This system had been in a long decay

since the rubber bust. By 1948 the dominant class was reduced to a few impoverished descendants of the old aristocratic rubber merchant families (Wagley 1976:103). Following the long economic depression of the 1950s and 1960s, these families were further reduced in their national and local class rankings.

The impoverishment of the dominant class led many Itaenses to conclude that by the 1960s Itá no longer possessed a class system. Everyone was considered a member of the second class (*gente de segunda*) as the first class (*gente de primeira*) disappeared. In "folk" terms, social class was defined by a number of categories such as occupation, family, race, education, and wealth. Ideally, the members of the upper class held jobs not requiring any manual labor (such as a merchant), were from a good family background, were well educated (high school or college), were relatively wealthy in terms of local standards, and were of Caucasian descent. In reality, however, even during the rubber boom all of these criteria were rarely met. Following the prolonged depression lasting through the 1960s, these criteria were increasingly difficult to fulfill as most sources of wealth were eroded, opportunities for education disappeared, and family and race lines were blurred by intermarriage and migration.

Despite the impoverishment of the dominant class and the "folk" idea that social class had disappeared, the class system in Itá continued to function. By the late 1950s and

early 1960s there were basically two classes in the municipality. The first class was the dominant class (merchants, large landowners, professionals, civil servants). Throughout the period they continued to control the economy and politics, although under reduced circumstances. The second class was the working class. There were four divisions within the working class. The first division included landless freguesas. They were principally várzea extractors, although some were terra firme farmers. The second division included autonomous terra firm farmers living on unclaimed land. These farmers were tied to a trading post patrão by debt-credit ties.

The third division was composed of small landowners on the várzea and terra firme. The small landowners were both extractors and farmers. The fourth division consisted of the urban poor. These people provided various domestic services to the urban dominant class as well as engaging in seasonal extraction. Some also farmed. These divisions within the working class were not mutually exclusive as movement between them was common.

In addition to the four divisions in the working class, there was a subdivision which cross-cut the other divisions. It consisted of modest small-scale merchants and money lenders or "brokers." The "brokers" were only minimally differentiated from the rest of the working class. They were always under the control of a member of the dominant class. Yet, the brokers did serve as leaders among their

working class division and often dealt with the dominant class in the interests of their class division. These brokers never developed into an upper peasantry since their fellow workers were highly mobile and could escape prolonged exchange manipulation duplicity (dominant class and broker) by switching to another patrão's control, moving to unowned terra firme, or simply leaving the area.

By the 1960s there were increasing changes within certain cultural traditions. On the one hand, the continued depression diminished the grandeur of the festivals for Saint Anthony and Saint Benedict. Less people attended the festivals and less revenue was generated for the Church. In addition, the Boi Bumba ceremony described by Wagley in 1948 (1976:204-8) was completely discontinued. In fact, the ceremony witnessed by Wagley and Galvão was the last one held in Itá, and it was performed only at Wagley's request.

At the same time that these traditions were in temporary or permanent decline, there were other innovations diffusing into the community. Radios became commonplace possessions of townspeople and with radio came increased awareness of national events. An occasional movie was shown in a large building which also served as a dance hall during festival time. Several bars opened, boasting kerosene refrigerators. They sold the traditional cachaça alcohol along with cold beer and soft drinks. And finally, soccer and volleyball were introduced to Itá by 1962. Soccer quickly became a local passion with two rival teams sporting

uniforms battling each other on Sunday afternoons (Wagley 1968:302-3).

The rubber bust and depression period came to an end in 1964. The contemporary period which followed (1964-86) was marked by an increase in state intervention in politics and economics and the penetration of new capitalists firms in an all-out attempt to develop the Amazon. The efforts to develop the region brought many changes to Itá. But as will be seen in the following chapters, these changes were heavily shaped by the ecological and political economic structures established during nearly four centuries of Euro-Amazonian history. Among the salient structures shaping the contemporary period were the domination of an extractive economy with a history of resource depletion, an agricultural sector that served as an adjunct to extraction and led to frequent food shortages, persistent labor shortages for all sectors, a class system divided between merchants/landowners and workers which was principally maintained through control of exchange rather than land, and the aviamento system which held workers and merchants alike in debt.

CHAPTER IV THE CHANGING ECONOMY: 1964-1986

In the thirty-six year span following Wagley's and Galvão's research on Amazon Town (1948), the economy of Itá has undergone significant modifications. From a depressed economy based on the extraction of devalued rubber, cacao, oleaginous seeds, hides, and production of subsistence agriculture in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s, the economy "boomed" with the introduction of large scale timber extraction in the late 1960s and 1970s. In the last two decades timber extraction has expanded rapidly and has easily become Itá's leading export by volume and value. Accompanying the timber boom has been the establishment of numerous small scale sawmills. Also during this period there has been growth in the urban job sector, a new demand for palm-heart extraction and canning, a modest expansion of cattle raising, jute production, and agricultural production, and a resurgence in the market for rubber. In addition, a government contracted oil exploration outfit operated in the area for two years and hired hundreds of wage laborers for manual labor. And finally, the growth of nearby industrial and mining projects such as in Jarí, Macapá, Carajás, Serra Pelada, Breves, and Belém has induced a continuous emigration of individuals seeking

temporary or permanent employment. Each of these activities has generated new sources of wealth which furthers the economic boom.

The origins of Itá's economic boom can be traced to major changes in national and regional economic policies occurring soon after Brazil's military coup in 1964. The military coup implanted a new centralist, authoritarian, military regime. This regime has had strong interventionist designs on the Amazon region. By 1966 the new government began enacting extensive programs of economic development in the region. These programs ranged from the building of infrastructure (roads, hydroelectric dams, communications systems, colonization projects, schools, health posts) to the encouragement of growth in extractive, cattle, agricultural, and manufacturing sectors through generous incentives and subsidies.

The development efforts first made an impact in Itá in the form of incentives and subsidies for timber extraction and lumber production. The incentives and subsidies attracted new groups of national and international capital which expanded into the area. Next, small government loans to farmers and cattle ranches in Itá stimulated modest growth in food production. This was followed by a modest growth of government jobs in the urban sector, migrations of Itaenses to government supported mining and industrial projects, local oil exploration by Brazil's nationalized oil company, and tariffs on foreign rubber import which led to a

resurgence in rubber extraction. As this new public and private capital penetrated Itá and precipitated the boom, it also stimulated a reorganization of key economic institutions. As with past economic trends, the present reorganization has built upon traditional economic institutions without enacting major structural changes.

In this chapter the character of the economic boom and the transformations it has engendered will be examined. The chapter will be divided into six parts. The first part will be a general overview of the regional development process. This will be followed by an examination of economic changes in the wood sector. Next is an examination of the palm-heart, rubber and cattle sectors, and then the agricultural, hunting, and fishing sectors. The final two parts will cover changes in the urban job sector and recent trends in migration.

The Regional Economy After 1964

During the 1940s and 1950s the Brazilian government adopted an economic policy of import-substitution-industrialization (ISI). This policy aimed to build up a national industrial base (principally in the south) with well developed linkages between capital goods, intermediate goods, and mass consumption goods industries. These industries were designed to supply the internal market, to stimulate its level of demand, and to end the dependence on imports of manufactured goods (Bernstein 1982:221).

Dependence on imports had been severely hampering investment and industrial development due to balance-of-payment problems.

In Brazil ISI was accomplished by foreign financing and foreign technology. Multinational corporations were allowed to assume commanding interests in key industries. With this control, multinationals were able to reorder the economy to serve their purposes (in a sense denationalize it) and transferred huge profits from Brazil. At the same time Brazil was becoming increasingly indebted to foreign lending agencies. In addition, the industrialization that took place tended to be capital intensive (failing to absorb the growing labor supply) and tended toward production of luxury items that only a minority in Brazil could consume. To ensure an internal market for luxury items the government encouraged income concentration for the middle class, at the expense of the working class. Also, working class wages were kept low in order to attract multinational firms.

The effects of ISI policy were repatriation of profits to foreign nations, enrichment for a small national group of people (middle and upper class), and the need for political repression to maintain a submissive working force. By the early 1960s this policy met increasing opposition from rural and urban workers' groups who threatened to upset the pattern of industrialization. In order to protect the policy and the benefits enjoyed by the middle and upper classes, the military took over the government in a coup in

1964. The military regime pursued a policy designed to supply the needed order and repression to continue the industrialization policy and protect the wealth gained by the upper and middle classes.

Following the military coup of 1964 there was a major initiative to redefine the role of the Amazon region in terms of the nation's economic and political goals. In particular, the Amazon was increasingly seen as an untapped frontier ready to provide needed resources and generate capital to fuel the south's industrialization process, and to pay mounting foreign debts. To tap the Amazon's resources, the military government (now reorganized into a more centralized, bureaucratic, and authoritarian form) created state enterprises to take key initiatives in economic development (Foweraker 1981:151; Bunker 1985:79). Joining in this venture were both large national capital and international capital. This combination came to be known as the triple alliance as each entity functioned in collusion to accumulate the nation's wealth (Evans 1979:11-12).

In 1966 the state applied its development apparatus to the Amazon with the initiation of the program Operation Amazon. This program was designed to use primarily private capital to finance development. To attract private capital, the program gave generous incentives to firms investing in agricultural, livestock, lumber, industrial, and "basic services" sectors. The state created the SUDAM agency (Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia or the

Superintendency for the Development of the Amazon) to direct development efforts. SUDAM replaced SPVEA in this capacity. SUDAM administered three programs to encourage investment: direct tax-credit subsidies of federal income tax liabilities that could go as high as 75% of total investment cost of specific projects, corporate income tax exemptions that ranged as high as 100% for up to fifteen years on income derived from Amazon projects, and import duty exemptions on equipment and machinery (Browder 1986:100-113; Mahar 1979:12). In addition, SUDAM used public capital to develop regional infrastructure such as roads, dams for electricity, and improved communication systems. Although private investment was to be the cornerstone of Amazon development, most of the capital used ended up coming from public sources.

In 1970 Operation Amazon was succeeded by another development program called Plano de Integração Nacional (National Integration Plan or PIN). Unique about this program was the provision made for small farmer colonization (Martine 1980:86). The plan called for the building of the Transamazon and other highways and the settling of 100,000 small farming families in various colonization projects along the highways. There were several reasons for colonization. For one, the government envisioned that colonization would effectively occupy the Amazon and lessen geopolitical fears of losing control of the region to foreign powers. In addition, government planners speculated

that massive migration into the Amazon, primarily from the Northeast, would relieve social and political problems caused by drought, land concentration, population growth, and rural-urban migration in that area. This was seen by the planners as a less radical alternative than dealing directly with the social problems of that region (Barbira-Scazzocchio 1980:19).

Many problems arose with PIN, some having to do with bureaucratic bottlenecks, lack of management skills, lack of adequate planning, and some having to do with conflicts of interest within the state. The colonization program fell far short of the 100,000 family settlement projection. Only 6,000 families were settled along the Transamazon highway by 1974 (Mahar 1979:23). By 1978 the number of families settled by the state for the entire Amazon (including the western territory of Rondônia) increased to only 24,242 (Arruda 1978 cited in Sawyer 1984). In fact, the number of people absorbed by the Amazon frontier, in planned and spontaneous colonization, for the 1970s equaled only 4.4% of the number of rural-to-urban migrants in Brazil in a single year (Wood and Wilson 1984:151). The Amazon was proving not to be a safety valve for population pressures.

PIN's agricultural programs for small farmers also ran into a number of problems which kept production low and colonists' failure high. Large scale capital interest groups such as the Associação do Empresários do Amazônia (Amazon Enterpenuer Association) took this opportunity to

fault small-farmer colonization and to pressure the state to end the program. They proposed that large scale enterprises, private colonization projects, and cattle ranching were more viable alternatives for developing the region. The large capital interest groups succeeded in their lobbying efforts and by 1974 the state changed its course. The colonization project was labeled a failure and blame was largely placed on the colonists (Wood and Schmink 1979). This sudden alteration of policy reflected an incongruency between the socially-oriented objectives of colonization and the requirements of capitalist expansion, which for Brazil meant capital accumulation for large scale enterprise, not small farmer settlements (Martine 1980:92).

By 1975 the government began viewing the Amazon exclusively as a "resource frontier" and public colonization was deemphasized (Mahar 1979:26). A new plan called POLAMAZONIA was created in which development efforts were concentrated on fifteen growth poles scattered about the region. In the poles the state developed infrastructure which created a more favorable investment climate for private enterprise. This procedure was clearly more in line with the logic of accumulation under the triple alliance (Mahar 1979:27). The state encouraged private investment in mining, livestock, lumber, tourism, and modern agriculture. Each of these sectors was capable of generating or conserving foreign revenue which was essential for paying the foreign debt.

POLAMAZONIA, coupled with previous program incentives, led to a boom in lumbering, cattle ranching, and mining. SUDAM allocated the major portion of its funds to the first two activities. In fact, by 1983 lumber accounted for 50.5% and livestock 30.9% of all SUDAM subsidies (Browder 1986:105). Of these activities, ranching was the most questionable since cattle raised in the Amazon are of inferior quality and the ranches are only marginally profitable (Mahar 1979:118,123). Yet, investment in land provided a good hedge against the triple digit inflation of the 1970s (Mahar 1979:124). Corporations with no previous experience in ranching considered rural property a solid store of value, rather than an active factor of production. Also, the opening of new roads increased land value which made land speculation very profitable. Most companies investing in ranching appear to have been drawn primarily by land speculation and inflation hedging since most of them never seriously undertook any form of productive activity (Martine 1980:87).

Timber extraction, by contrast, is a well-established activity in the Amazon. With government subsidies to increase regional access to national market centers and port cities, the extraction of timber has boomed (Browder 1986:63). For example, between 1975 and 1980 the Amazon's total wood production increased by 156% (from 4.5 million cubic meters to 11.5 million cubic meters). This growth represented an increase in total national output of

roundwood from 14.3% in 1975 to nearly 31.8% by 1980 (Browder 1986:68). The number of legally licensed sawmills jumped from 194 in 1965 to 1,639 by 1981. This number, however, does not include the scores of unlicensed mills (Browder 1986:56-7).

While a large volume of timber has been extracted during this period, benefits to the Amazon region have been limited by several factors. For one, industrial processing of lumber has lagged behind the extraction boom. Until legislation required local processing in 1973, much of the extracted timber was exported in logs and not sawn in the region. Even after passage of this law, processing has tended to be limited to rough sawn wood and pulp. The production of rough sawn wood, as practiced in the Amazon, is a very wasteful technique. For example, for export quality mahogany sawnwood, sawing processes renders only about 35% of a log marketable (Browder 1986:80). In 1980, one-half of all lumber exports to foreign markets were rough or semi-industrialized products.

Second, lumber production depends heavily on foreign markets which by the latter 1970s and early 1980s were saturated by wood. In particular, mahogany flooded the United States market in 1984 after being subsidized by the Brazilian government (Browder 1986:9). As these markets grew soft and exports declined, many small lumber firms went out of business while the large ones struggled to survive.

In milltowns unemployment ran high, a trend which continues until today.

Finally, timber extracting firms have tended to be highly selective of species cut. Of a possible 700 known tree species in the Amazon, fewer than twenty-five species account for 90% of present-day wood production. In 1983 just one species, mahogany, accounted for approximately 54% of the volume of all semi-manufactured sawnwood exports (Browder 1986:57). By concentrating on these species there is a tendency to overexploit and deplete reserves. Once depleted, timber extractors move on to new areas, leaving an environmentally impoverished area behind. It is important to note, however, that extraction of these species does not deforest the area since the valued species are not located in homogenous stands but widely scattered throughout the forest.

Under POLAMAZONIA there have been several large scale projects initiated in manufacturing, mining, and energy production (hydroelectric dams). One example is the Jarí tree plantation initially financed by the American shipping tycoon Daniel Ludwig. Ludwig's goal was to build the world's largest tree plantation to produce pulp in the middle of the Amazon's tropical jungle. In 1967 he purchased a four million acre tract of land along the Jarí River for US \$3 million, about US \$.75/acre (Fisk 1985:13). Part of this land was cleared and fast growing gmelina, pine, and eucalyptus trees were planted. By the late 1979 a

US \$270 million pulp mill and wood-fired power plant (built in Japan and towed overseas to Jarí) began operating. In addition to the plantation and pulp production, there were several secondary operations undertaken including a 35,000 acre rice farm, a cattle ranch, a kaolin mine (used in production of china and glossy paper), and various food producing projects. The infrastructure needed for the project was massive. Over 2,500 miles of roads and 50 miles of railroad had to be built. Approximately 2,000 vehicles and various types of heavy equipment for the plantation operation were also imported (Fisk 1985:18). Housing for the approximately 6,000 workers directly engaged in the project also had to be constructed.

By 1980 Ludwig had invested approximately 500 million dollars in the project (Pinto 1986:202). The Brazilian government gave incentives for the investment, including a exemption on income tax for ten years and suspension of duties on imported equipment (Pinto 1986:39-40). Despite the massive investment in the scheme, the Jarí tree plantation did not produce a profit. There were multiple problems involving budget overruns, bureaucratic disorder, labor cost and high turnover, and perhaps most damaging, the failure of gmelina trees to meet their targeted growth estimates (Fisk 1985:23). At the same time, public resentment toward the project grew (Jarí was frequently seen as an imperialistic invasion of the Amazon) which pressured the government to exercise more control over the

project. Under these mounting problems, Ludwig decided to sell the project. In 1982 the project was purchased by a consortium of twenty-two Brazilian companies paying US \$100 million dollars and the government Bank of Brazil another US \$180 million (Pinto 1986:206).

The government has also aided various mining projects such as magnanese mined in Amapá, cassiterite in Rondônia, bauxite on the Trombetas River, and, the largest of all, iron ore at Serra dos Carajás (Bunker 1985:86). Investment in Carajás has been estimated between US \$1 billion to US \$4.3 billion (Mahar 1979:111; Dayton 1975 cited in Bunker 1985:86). Infrastructure development has been extensive and includes the construction of the Tucuruí dam for electrical power, a 876-km railway, and port facilities in São Luís do Maranhão. The payoff is expected from 17,885 million tons of 66% pure iron ore, 60 million tons of manganese, 2,000 million tons of copper, 48 million tons of aluminum, 88 million tons of nickel, and 100 tons of gold (Cota 1984:74-5).

Like timber extraction and lumber production, most of these large mining and manufacturing projects have limited benefits for the region. Mining, for example, has been promoted to alleviate Brazil's balance-of-payment problems. As a result of this goal, technologies are increasing capital intensive which decreases the ability of this sector to absorb labor (Bunker 1985:86). Mining, transportation, and hydroelectric projects also displace indigenous and

peasant populations and create extensive deforestation. Mining also tends to develop into enclave economies, lacking many forward and backward linkages for future economic growth. As an enclave economy, most value generated is transferred out of the region (primarily to the south of Brazil and overseas). Furthermore, the infrastructure constructed is tied to a nonrenewable resource and will likely lose its utility once mines are exhausted (Bunker 1985:87).

The basic concepts behind POLAMAZONIA have continued to direct development efforts into the 1980s. In essence, the strategy now emphasizes economic growth and generation of revenues to pay off foreign debts. Matters of social equity have largely been set aside (Moran 1983:9). For the community of Itá, the affects of this and previous policies have played a central role in shaping economic change.

The Wood Sector in Itá

The first and foremost effect that the various Amazon development programs have had on the economy of Itá is in the creation of a booming timber extraction sector. Shortly after Operation Amazon liberated financial incentives and credit through regional banks, four multinational timber firms and numerous national firms set up extraction operations in the municipality of Itá. The firms were attracted by the large timber stands located on the várzeas of the mainland and the Great Island of Itá. This timber

was easily accessible and fluvial transportation made harvesting inexpensive. In addition, the timber reserves were located close to the major sawmill complexes of Breves and Macapá, saving both time and money in the transportation of logs.

Among the timber firms to conduct business in Itá, the most active and influential are Brumasa (formally a Dutch company named Bruynzeel, then bought out by a Brazilian consortium), Eidai (Japanese), Brasil Norte (Brazilian), and Madeira Tropical (American). The Jarí tree plantation also buys light woods for pulp from Itá. Of the large corporations represented in Itá, Brumasa has made the most direct impact. In the early 1970s Brumasa began buying land in Itá with the benefit of SUDAM's fiscal incentives (Bunker 1985:100-note 3). Brumasa ended up owning 95,708 hectares of várzea with rich stands of timber. As will be seen, the corporation made quite a stir in buying land and then trying to control the timber extraction activities of the land's occupants.

Throughout the 1970s until the present, the timber firms have financed an often frenzied rate of timber extraction. Wood exports increased drastically from a low in 1950 of only 10,548 cubic meters to 450,300 in 1980 (IBDE 1950, 1980). The timber species most frequently extracted include virola, andiroba, sucupira, muiritinga, macauba, louro, esponja, and sumauma among others. Wood has been mostly exported in logs since Itá possesses neither

adequate sawmills to process the volume extracted nor the technology to produce the much valued veneers and plywoods. The sawmills that have sprung up with the boom (approximately forty have been operating at one time or another since 1966) have all been small scale primitive operations that produce rough sawn wood.

The effects of the timber boom on Itá's economy have been varied and wide ranging. As with past extraction cycles, timber extraction is unmechanized and labor intensive. In addition, the relatively high wages paid for timber extraction drains labor away from subsistence agriculture which leads to food shortages and food importation. Food production is further hampered by landowners placing restrictions on the opening of new garden plots, in order to preserve uncut trees. Freguesas are forced to use depleted plots which reduce crop yields. Timber extraction also has drained labor from other extractive activities, particularly rubber. And finally, timber extraction tends to overexploit a limited number of species which leads to a steady depletion of marketable timber species. Depletion of several of these species also has eliminated valuable oleaginous seeds which have served as important sources of cash income.

Among the novelties brought to Itá during the timber boom have been the growth of small privately owned sawmills and an influx of cash which has increased consumption of imported goods. The influx of cash also has the effect of

alleviating many cases of freguesa indebttness to patrões. Despite this development, the patron-client system has been preserved through unique articulations with the capitalist timber firms reminiscent of the old aviamento system. There have also been a few challenges to traditional economic relations by virtue of direct penetration of capitalist firms into Itá. As will be shown, in these cases the traditional economic relations proved resistant enough to alter the capitalist relations. And finally, the boom has led to the creation of land conflicts over timber resources. A discussion of each of these changes will follow.

The process of timber extraction in Itá is extremely labor intensive. For the majority of producers, timber extraction does not involve any mechanization until a barge or tugboat comes to transport the logs from the extraction site. The exceptions are the rare use of chainsaws and the use of trucks for hauling logs on the terra firme. On the várzea, trees are felled, limbed, bucked (partitioned), hauled, and then floated to a collection point all by human power. The felling of trees is done by axe. Since many trees in the Amazon have skirts which flair at the base of the trunk, a scaffling structure is often erected to allow extractors to cut above the skirts. The scaffling is made out of small trees tied together by vines. It is assembled in the form of a lean-to which surrounds the tree two meters from the ground or water level.

Once trees are felled, they are limbed and then bucked into logs five to six meters in length. The trees range in size from one to three meters in diameter. The total transformation of one tree into logs can take several men between a half and a full day of work. The transformation process is very wasteful. Extractors can market logs of only five to six meter lengths. Any excess wood, such as the huge branches, are left to rot in the jungle (which, however, is a plus for the nutrient-starved ecosystem).

Once the trees are cut into logs, a path is cleared to drag the trees to the nearest stream. The path is crossed with fallen trees over which the prepared logs are pushed. It usually takes from three to four men to drag the logs out. A large log of two meters in diameter requires seven to eight men. Once the logs are in the water they are tied side by side with vines or with metal cables passing through hooks nailed into each log. These long rows of logs are called jangadas (rafts) and contain up to a hundred logs. Most of the wood extracted in this manner is light wood that floats. If heavier wood is desired, then these logs have to be tied to lighter wood that will support them in the water. Once in the water the jangadas are delivered to a collection point. This is usually done once a month. The logs will remain at the collection point until a barge or tugboat come to transport the wood to a downstream sawmill.

On the terra firme, extraction technology is slightly different. The lack of streams requires extensive clearing

of logging roads upon which a truck can pass. Trees are felled and prepared as on the várzea. Once ready they are loaded onto trucks by hand wrenches. The trucks haul the logs, two or three at a time, to the nearest navigable stream where a jangada is made or a barge picks up the logs.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s timber extraction has proven to be the most promising employment opportunity for unskilled laborers within the municipal limits. The relatively high wages paid for timber extraction progressively attracts labor away from other sectors. For example, an industrious worker can earn a net profit ranging anywhere between several hundred to US \$2,000 for five months of work. The amount of profit depends on the number of cubic meters of wood delivered by the worker, the species harvested, and the amount paid per cubic meter by the buyer. Buyer prices vary greatly, from US\$ 2.50 to 28.50 per cubic meter for the same wood depending on the particular financing arrangements made. A comparable amount of time spent in rubber extraction earns roughly only half the amount of timber extraction while manioc farming earns even less. Due to these wage differentials, most able bodied men and even a few women in the interior have extracted timber at some time during the last twenty years. From the non-random household survey of the four rural hamlets/neighborhoods, 72% of men fourteen years and older reported working in timber extraction or lumber production during their lives (in town 46% of men had worked in the

wood sector). People opt for timber extraction even though it is harder and more dangerous than other extraction activities or farming.

Rubber extraction was one of the first sectors affected by the labor drain to timber extraction. Rubber exports fell sharply from 904 tons in 1950 to 230 tons in 1980. However, by the mid-1980s a substantial increase in the price of raw rubber has attracted many workers back into rubber extraction. Many workers are now busy clearing rubber trails which have not been in production for twenty years (see below). Some workers even combine várzea timber extraction with rubber extraction, since each may be pursued in a different season.

A second area hit hard by the timber labor drain is the agricultural sector. During the timber boom food production has declined even though the municipality's population has increased by nearly 28%. For example, between 1940 and 1980 manioc production has decreased by 51%, rice by 88%, beans by 68%, and corn by 59% (IBGE 1940, 1980). Table 4:3 lists each of these crops by decade. The declining food production has led to the steady increase in importation of food and frequent food shortages in town. The tidal várzea area also suffers from food shortages, primarily the lack of manioc which cannot be grown there.

Although the town and tidal várzea areas suffer from food shortages, rural workers living outside of these areas rarely experience severe or prolonged shortages. This is

because timber extraction, at least on the várzea, tends to be a seasonal endeavor which allows workers to maintain subsistence gardens in the off season. The season for cutting on the várzea is the rainy season, January to May. During this time waterways are swollen and lowlands are flooded which greatly facilitates fluvial transport of logs. In the dry season, when transportation of logs is more difficult, many workers return to their gardens maintained by their families on the terra firme or várzea. There are some workers who take their timber wages and live in town during the dry season. Other individuals work the year round extracting timber, particularly on the terra firme. Few of these workers maintain gardens and they are therefore susceptible to the same food shortages as townspeople and people on the tidal várzea.

There are many variations in the seasonal labor migration and daily routines of timber extraction. One of the many varieties is demonstrated by the Azevedo family. The Azevedo household consists of an elder mother and father, their son and his wife, and the son's six children from age twelve to one. The elder Azevedos, who migrated to Itá in 1940 from Breves, had been rubber collectors and subsistence farmers in the interior. The elder male, Nicanor, and his son, Benedito, had also transported fruit on a sail driven canoe they once owned. In the 1960s they moved to the town of Itá and built two houses on Second Street. They acquired some land six kilometers from town

for farming through a colonization program (see below). The women also found part-time employment as street sweepers for the municipality. The gardening and women's wages barely supported the family, so Nicanor and Benedito decided to extract timber while the women and children stayed in town and cared for the garden.

Nicanor explained how he and his son began extracting wood. Just before the rainy season in December they paddled their canoe to the Great Island of Itá and asked permission to extract timber for a large landowner on Mojú River, Lourenço Braga. Nicanor and Benedito would deliver the logs to the landowner for a set price per cubic meter. The landowner agreed and financed the pair with goods from his store until the first delivery of wood. Nicanor and his son were told to extract from a certain area located deep within the Island. They decided to stay with some relatives on Mojú and commute daily to the area, an hour and a half trip by canoe each way.

They began the extraction process spending a few days scouting the area for the particular wood to be cut. Usually they looked for andiroba, sucupira, or louro. Once they had found a stand in close proximity to water they began the extraction process. The work cycle began each morning at sunrise (the only exceptions were for Sundays and important Saint days when work was considered a transgression against the saints and could lead to supernatural reprisal). The pair paddled their canoe to the

site of extraction. Once there they recovered a gill net placed in the water the previous day. The fish caught were boiled or salted for lunch. They also ate manioc flour sent from their home garden by the women. The fish and manioc diet was supplemented by forest fruits and, on occasion, by wild game downed with Nicanor's shotgun. After preparing the fish, they began the arduous task of felling, limbing, and bucking the tree with hand axes. They continued working, stopping only for lunch, until 5:30 to 6:00 pm when they reset the gill net and paddled back to their base.

Once the Azevedos had about 100 logs ready, which was a month's work for them, they arranged for two to three men to help drag the logs to the water. Once in the water they tied the logs into a jangada and delivered them to the landowner. While some extractors had access to a small diesel powered boat to tow the jangadas, the Azevedos had to use their canoe and favorable currents and tides to transport the logs. After delivering the logs the landowner settled the Azevedo account. There was usually enough profit from the logs to pay off the debts at the store and still have a small surplus. By the end of April the Azevedos had saved the equivalent of six to seven hundred US dollars and returned home. This money was used for subsistence until the next rainy season and to purchase a few consumer items (radio, bicycle, watches, etc.).

After a few years of timber extraction Nicanor suffered an incapacitating health problem so the two gave up cutting

timber. Both were happy to leave the harsh working conditions. Nicanor explained that they spent four or five months constantly in the water and mud with the ever present risk of injury from river fauna and falling trees. The Azevedos had entered timber extraction with the hope of making enough money to buy a boat and motor so they could make an easier living transporting goods. But they soon realized that timber extraction, at the level they were participating, would hardly enable them to save enough for this dream.

Despite the hard work involved in timber extraction, the wages paid enable most workers to increase consumption of imported goods. For example, most families with one or more members working in timber possess such items as battery powered radios, small gas stoves, bicycles, and a wider variety of clothing. Many timber extractors rebuild their homes, replacing palm-thatch with boards for siding and tile for roofs.

Manoel Costa, a brother-in-law of Benedito Azevedo, extracts timber and commented on this new-found, although limited, prosperity. Manoel lives on the terra firme of the Bacá stream. He says that before cutting timber he relied on his manioc gardens and rubber extraction to eke out a living. Since the late 1970s, however, he has been seasonally migrating to the island of Urutaí in Itá to cut wood. For three or four months of cutting he usually earns nearly US \$2,000. Over the years he has used this seasonal

money to buy food when needed as well as buy a small gas stove (now broken), a radio (now broken), a bicycle (which he later sold), a strong flashlight for night hunting, a gill net for fishing, and most recently lumber and tile for a new house. Manoel still depends on his garden for the bulk of his food and also sells surplus manioc for a slight profit. By working hard at gardening and extraction Manoel feels he provides his young family of seven with a much higher standard of living than in the past.

By contrast, one of Manoel's neighbors in Bacá, Pedro Chuva, has never worked in extraction. He is a full time manioc farmer. In conversations with Pedro he lamented the poor returns from manioc. He compared his situation with that of Manoel's. By never working in timber he said...

Look at what I have. I can never afford to build a nice house like Manoel has (Pedro's house was made of palm-thatch). Nor can I buy clothes, a bicycle, or even a stove. When my family is sick I have no cash for medicine and must ask for loans. I even have a hard time buying shells for my gun. If I don't have shells we don't eat meat.

The principal problem Pedro faces is chronically low prices for manioc production which seriously restrains his ability to consume imported goods. Coupled with the visible signs of his neighbor's gains, Pedro's sense of relative deprivation has steadily increased. Nevertheless, Pedro is unique in resisting the strong temptation to enter the extractive market. He prefers farming and wants to stay close to home since his wife had been ill for some time.

By the mid 1980s the high rate of timber extraction has begun to take a toll on Itá's forest reserves. Although there is no concrete data on depletion rates of various timber species in Itá, observations by timber buyers, extractors, and the general public leave little doubt an extraction decline is in progress. The first areas to suffer from depletion are on the Great Island of Itá and várzea of the mainland. Nearly two decades of extraction have reduced the quantity and quality of marketable timber. A common comment in the interior is that each year the size of exported logs gets smaller. In fact, many of the large timber firms supplying international markets no longer bother to buy wood from many areas on the Island. The large firms need logs over a meter in diameter to process them into plywood and veneers. The timber still coming from these areas goes mainly to sawmills producing rough sawn wood for the national market.

As the Island's and mainland várzea's reserves are depleted, attention has turned to the timber stands on the mainland terra firme. This timber was bypassed earlier since extraction involved higher capital inputs for trucks and for labor to clear roads. In 1986, however, there are approximately ten operations in Itá employing trucks and extracting timber from the terra firme. With the combination of the new terra firme reserves and the old várzea stands, several sawmill operators estimate that Itá still has twenty good years of timber extraction left.

After that point in time, the sawmill operators plan to move their operations to new extraction areas or to change occupations. Most of the timber extractors who are aware of the impending depletion also maintain that they will either migrate or switch occupations.

Since the timber industry in Itá is purely extractive in nature, no systematic attempt has been made to manage or replant trees. There are laws requiring reforestation. But the laws do not specify the reforestation site. Most large firms complying with the law subcontract with reforestation firms to plant trees in other areas far from Itá. The rest of the timber firms avoid reforestation laws by not owning land. They contract for timber with numerous landowners who do not comply with the law. They also extract illegally from public lands. Enforcement of the laws regulating timber extraction is impossible. The Federal Department of Forestry (IBDF) sends one agent once a year to oversee Itá's 9,903,000 hectares. This agent is easily led astray from illegal extraction sites or bribed by agents of the timber firms.

Among local workers and landowners there are varied, often contradictory attitudes toward timber depletion. Some downplay the consequences of depletion, maintaining that the jungle will always provide a living. If one tree species is depleted, another will replace it. With time they assume the original species will naturally return without any attempt at management. Other people recognize the hazards

of depletion. Many of these individuals are small landowners who have exhausted timber reserves on their land. With the loss of timber income they have suffered a substantial drop in standard of living. Other individuals have seen the destruction of the oleaginous seed collection activities as virola trees (which produces acuuba seeds) and andiroba trees have been removed. Since the 1800s these oleaginous seeds have been one of Itá's principal exports. They were exported whole or were processed into oils for local use. However, by the 1980s it is rare to find these once abundant seeds. The disappearance of the seeds and oils made from them destroys both a valued medicinal remedy and a source of badly needed income.

During the nearly twenty years of extraction, all but two of the approximately forty sawmills have operated in the rural interior. The technology employed in these mills is considered primitive within the sawmill industry. Most of the small mills consist of a single circular saw (buzz saw) powered by a diesel motor. The mill is usually housed in an open-sided roofed structure. Wood is sawn most frequently into rough boards which is sold locally or sent to Belém for national distribution. The production of rough sawn wood is wasteful and the area surrounding these mills is littered with saw dust and wood wasters. With more advanced sawmill technology, this waste can be eliminated. For example, by laminating (stripping fine layers of wood from a log) or turning wood into pulp a much higher ratio of wood

per tree can be used productively. However, in Itá there is no incentive nor available capital to acquire the expensive equipment necessary for such processing. Once sawn, wood is stored vertically on racks exposed to the weather. Almost none of the small mills chemically treat the wood to protect against insects or rapid deterioration.

The majority of these small privately owned mills were established after 1973 when legislation prohibited the export of unprocessed logs. They were installed with the aid of small producer loans or through profits earned from extracting timber. Most of these mills have profited intermittently for a period of two to five years and then have been forced to relocate or disband. In general, they have been severely hampered by lumber price fluctuations and the lack of commercial linkages to market their wood. Depletion of easily accessible timber species also has created insurmountable problems. As production profits fall off, they have been unable to make payments on loans, replace broken parts, or to pay workers for further extraction. In 1986 there are probably no more than ten sawmills operating in the municipality and none operating full time.

The two remaining sawmills were located on the outskirts of the town of Itá. The first, built in 1969, was never fully operational due to management difficulties (Miller 1976:300-1) and has sat idle throughout the 1980s. The second mill was established in the mid 1970s by a

businessman from the region with the aid of government and private loans. The mill then passed through a succession of owners with the final owner (up to 1986) being an American who had married into a Brazilian family from the South. With each owner the mill prospered briefly and then collapsed. There were various factors contributing to each owner's failure including government export regulation, price fluctuation, competition from larger mills, bad luck, and mismanagement.

At its peak in the early 1980s, the town sawmill consisted of a large roofed shelter containing two large band saws (the only ones used in the municipality) and two circular saws. Approximately eight-five workers were employed. The mill mainly produced varying size boards and furring strips, although some roundwood products (posts, and broom handles) were occasionally produced. The mill also had a front-end loader, several trucks, and a dock registered for international commerce. There were facilities for chemical treating of lumber. Sawn wood storage was in an open area adjacent to the mill while most unsawn wood was left in the river immediately in front of the mill. Although more advanced than the small mills in the interior, the town sawmill was still a small primitive operation by industrial wood sector standards. Wood production was a wasteful process with wasters and saw dust being used to raise the mill grounds above the river's flood

level. Local bakeries also took wasters to burn in their ovens.

Social Relations of Production and the Timber Industry

The development of the timber boom has generated several changes in the social relations of production in Itá. For example, timber firms such as Brumasa, Eidai, Brasil Norte, Madeira Tropical, and Jarí bypass the traditional intermediaries (the import-export firms) and deal directly with local landowners or other independent agents. In doing this, most timber firms did not deal in merchandise as the old rubber traders did. Merchandise is handled by the traditional channels between import-export firms and trading posts and new commercial channels supplying a growing number of retail stores in Itá. In addition, the timber firms do not extend credit as the old rubber traders did. The timber firms are not interested in establishing a long lasting clientele, especially since timber will eventually be depleted. Considerations about inflation also effect the extention of credit. The firms do, however, extend pre-payments on timber to be delivered in order to help finance extraction. And finally, the timber companies nearly always pay their debts in cash. In these ways, timber extracting clearly represents a divergence from the traditional economic relations.

The actual organization of workers to extract timber, however, has not changed greatly. Most timber extraction continues to be organized by patron-client ties through the traditional trading post. There are some exceptions. With the disappearance of 40% to 50% of the trading posts in the interior during the 1960s, space has been made for agents of the timber companies to deal directly with workers. These agents tend to deal in cash wages and engage less in supplying merchandise on credit than the trading post. In addition, on the land purchased by the Brumasa timber firm, there has been an attempt to pay timber extractors a set price for timber delivered without utilizing patron-client ties or a trading post. In the sawmill sector, the mills in the interior are organized by patron-client ties through trading posts or they are small operations worked by family members and/or neighbors. The sawmill in town, however, paid hourly wages. The workers did have an option to buy goods on credit through stores in town, or from a company store which operated during the 1980s.

Since the onset of the timber boom the trading post has been called upon to assume a principal role in organizing labor. This comes about since national and international timber firms entering Itá find it more cost-efficient to utilize the existing forms of labor organization. The timber firms or their agents usually contact trading posts patrões who own or control large tracts of land containing valuable timber. These patrões also have direct access to

labor through their freguesas and have the mechanism to finance and control them. By dealing with the trading post, the timber firms save themselves the complicated task of finding scarce labor, assigning workers to the scattered stands of timber, and financing workers in the manner to which they are accustomed (credit toward food, tools, and clothing).

With direct contacts to the timber firms and the increasing inflow of capital, these patrões have been best able to respond to the expanding market demands and to capitalize on the boom. The trading posts have organized increasingly larger groups of labor to extract from increasingly larger areas. The system which they have developed to extract timber is very similar to the rubber aviamento system. The freguesas are advanced cash, food, and tools, and then sent to extract timber. When the timber is delivered in a month or so, accounts are balanced. The trading post pays workers in goods with a 79%-100% mark-up for inflation, transportation costs, and profits. However, due to relatively high prices paid for timber extraction (up to US\$ 28.50 per cubic meter) and the increased availability of cash, there is usually an outstanding balance in favor of the extractor which is settled in cash. There are still cases of unscrupulous patrões manipulating exchange rates and workers mismanaging money so that a long lasting debt-relationship ensues. But by the 1980s the instances of

indebted workers who participate in timber extraction are growing rarer.

One example of a trading posts patrão's success in the timber boom is that of Oscar Fernandes who maintains the Casa Gato (house of the cat) trading post in town (see Wagley 1976:95,104). Dona Dora Andrade was the former owner of the post. As she aged, she turned the family business over to her brother-in-law, Oscar. This occurred in the 1960s. Oscar and his sons kept the business going through the economic depression of the early 1960s, although the post often suffered from a shortage of goods (Wagley 1968:301). But the Fernandes were well diversified. They owned approximately 12,570 hectares of land with many freguesas producing rubber, cacao, and food crops. The Fernandes also possessed a cattle ranch on a várzea island. When the first timber companies came to Itá, the Fernandes' landholdings and control over workers quickly attracted their attention. The Fernandes became one of the first to extract large quantities of timber from their land. With the profits earned the Fernandes' business prospered as much as ever since the rubber boom. The trading post's freguesia (total number of freguesas) grew to nearly 300 by 1986, by far the largest in the municipality.

With the new capital and secure contacts made, one of Oscar's sons, Antônio, took a full-time interest in timber extracting. He organized several labor parties and financed them through the family's trading post to extract from the

Fernandes' lands. He sold the logs to Brumasa who then helped him finance a truck for terra firme extraction on the public lands behind the town. Once on the terra firme Antônio extracted the year round. The Fernandes also used their political influence (Oscar was a former mayor and vice-mayor) with other local elites to have a road built into the interior. Funds for construction came from a federal grant while funds for maintenance came from the prefeitura (county government). The road was supposedly built to service an agricultural colony and to eventually connect Itá to the Transamazon highway. Neither of these goals were fulfilled and the road was principally used by the local wealthy families to extract timber and to plant pasture.

Antônio continued extracting timber until 1986. At the present he has abandoned extraction since much of his land and the accessible unowned terra firme land have been depleted of marketable timber. Antônio now spends his time overseeing his family's cattle ranches and running a newly opened bottled gas depository.

The trading posts, such as that owned by the Fernandes, are an important element in carrying through the timber boom. Yet, at the present time there are only twenty-six major trading posts left in Itá, down from an estimated fifty in the early part of the 20th century. The twenty-six major patrões are not able to monopolize timber extraction as their predecessors had done with rubber extraction. This

inability to control the boom market has also been aggravated by an influx of cash into the economy combined with relatively high wages for timber extraction. When workers have cash in their hands, they are able to avoid permanent debt and also to bypass the trading post to make purchases. At the same time there is an increasing number of regatões (river-boat traders) and retail stores being established in Itá which are willing to service the cash carrying work force. Increased worker mobility, due to the diesel motor boat, also allows workers to "shop around" instead of having to rely on the nearest trading post.

With the decline of trading post control over workers there is room for alternative forms of labor recruitment. In the timber extraction sector this space is increasingly taken by semi-independent timber contractors or compradores (buyers). These compradores are usually local entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs from the south of Brazil. They work as intermediaries or agents of the timber firms. They maintain a variety of relationships with the firms. In a few cases they are direct employees of timber firms, especially Brumasa and Eidai. These compradores receive a commission on the amount of timber delivered. More often they deal with a variety of large and small firms, selling to the firm with the best price.

There are generally two types of compradores in Itá, although these types are not mutually exclusive. The first are those who arrange the sale of timber from small and

medium size landowners. In most cases the landowners extract timber themselves and the compradores arrange shipping of wood and payment. On occasion the compradores finance the extractors with small cash loans or tools. Through this system the credit and debt system is only partially maintained. The extractors more frequently receive cash with which they buy goods from trading posts, stores in town, or from regatões.

The second type of comprador actually hires workers to extract. These compradores, known as gatos (cats) in other regions of the Amazon, organize labor to extract from public land or from the land of private landowners who either lack workers, a trading post, or the interest to extract for themselves. The compradores hire workers in town, moradores (occupants) on the land, or bring workers in from surrounding municipalities. The workers are mainly paid in cash with some minor financing and advancing of wages. In a few cases, well known and trusted compradores (who often have relatives in town) arrange for their workers to establish credit in a town store. This system also serves to partially duplicate the traditional patron-client, credit-debt relationship.

The compradores who hire workers to extract timber work under precarious conditions. Unlike the trading posts, they are unable to develop strong patron-client, credit-debt relationships to retain labor. They usually deal in cash with "free" workers who are prone to desert the comprador at

most inopportune times. In addition, landowners are likely to default on contracts with a comprador if a better buying price can be found. At the same time, workers and landowners have sufficient cause to be concerned with compradores. In many instances compradores take timber and never return to pay extractors or landowners.

An example of a comprador and his various dealings is the case of Wennuildo Flavio. Wennuildo, or "Mineiro" as people call him, is a young man in his 20s who came to Itá from the state of Minas Gerais in the center-south of Brazil. Initially he represented a small firm in Belo Horizonte, specializing in road asphaltting, which wished to enter the timber business. Mineiro had volunteered for the job since he was involved in a money scandal which had tarnished his reputation in Belo Horizonte. Mineiro first traveled to Belém where he established ties to a large sawmill. Next he ventured into the interior to scout for timber. After a number of years of doing business he came to Itá in 1985 and decided the municipality was a good spot to extract timber. He stayed in town making contacts and trying to secure his first contract. Mineiro complained that early on he got little help from local extractors and compradores. There was considerable competition to control timber contracts and also some resentment of an outsider coming to extract Itá's wealth.

Mineiro's first break came during a Worker's Week seminar sponsored by the Catholic Church. He met several

groups of autonomous workers and small landowners who agreed to sell timber to him. These workers were happy to deal with a comprador since they could escape some of the price exploitation common in dealings with trading posts. Mineiro contracted to buy sucupira. Once the contract was made, Mineiro began advancing some cash, equipment, and spare parts. One of the groups he contracted with was the hamlet of Camutá on the Pucuruí River. With the aid of Itá's Catholic Church, Camutá had managed to buy a truck and two chain saws (see next chapter for a further discussion of Camutá). Mineiro supplied parts, fuel, and his technical training to make sure all was functioning. Mineiro also performed favors and supplied numerous bottles of cachaça to several workers. He said this was expected of a contractor and he even had funds provided to him by his firm for these ends.

With Mineiro overseeing extraction and Camutá's diligent workers, the order was near completion within a month. Mineiro, in the meanwhile, had contracted for a barge from Belém to come and pick up the logs in Itá. As the barge arrived in Itá problems began. First, the barge arrived with a large leak. The crew had to wait for materials from Belém to repair the barge. As long as the barge was damaged the workers were unable to load logs. Second, the extractors of Camutá were in need of money and had grown tired of waiting for their final payment from Mineiro. They had accepted a second contract and a small

loan from a rival comprador and began extracting timber simultaneously for both compradores. The additional extracting further retarded fulfillment of Mineiro's contract.

The damaged barge and extraction slowdown left Mineiro in a difficult position. The barge was rented for only one month. If it stayed out any longer a significant fine had to be paid. Mineiro was forced to place constant pressure on workers until the order was finally completed and the timber delivered to Belém. For all his troubles Mineiro made a small profit on the shipment. He explained that the firm expected to earn a 120% profit on investments. He took a cut of this profit. In addition, Mineiro maintained that it was common practice for a comprador to withhold a portion of the wood to sell for himself. This withholding was to pay for various expenses incurred, such as buying alcohol for workers and also to boost the comprador's commission.

By the end of 1985 Mineiro sought to be more independent in his contract dealings. He abandoned his old firm and took a loan from a stronger local comprador and financing from the Brumasa timber company. With this capital he hired his own crew to extract timber from unowned land located on the Pucuruí River. By actually controlling the extraction workers he hoped to earn more profit and avoid any conflicts of interests or work slowdowns. Unfortunately, Mineiro found that hiring workers increased his problems. First, he had no direct access to a trading

post so he had to pay workers in cash. But his workers expected to be financed or at least to be given small cash advances (strong compradores always did this). Mineiro's cash reserves were limited and often he could not comply with these expectations. As a result, his workers would quit without warning. He commented that workers were spoiled by the big compradores who always had money. Little compadores like himself just could not keep up with financing workers.

In addition, since Mineiro lacked control of workers through debts, control of land, or patron-clientship, he had no way of retaining workers for long periods of time. His turnover was high, especially around festival time (June-July, and December). He complained that in December of 1985 he had a barge ordered and a contract nearly ready when the Saint Benedict festival began. All of his workers abandoned him to attend the festival which lasted two weeks. Without workers the timber was not delivered or loaded. The barge sat at the extraction site for the two weeks and Mineiro was forced to pay a large fine for delaying it.

Beyond the compradores and trading posts, there is a third method of organizing labor for timber extraction. This method was employed in only one case in Itá. It occurred on the land bought by the Brumasa timber firm. In the 1970s Brumasa bought 95,708 hectares, or approximately 10% of the municipality of Itá. On this land there were numerous occupants who were former freguesas of patrões who

controlled the area. The corporation decided to allow some of these occupants to stay on the land since the company needed workers to extract timber. The occupants were encouraged to extract timber from part of the reserve with the strict understanding that they deliver the timber to Brumasa. The occupants were also prohibited from opening new gardens which might destroy valuable trees. Brumasa agreed to pay cash for the timber cut. However, the corporation made no provisions to supply workers with goods or to finance extraction. In essence, the timber firm replaced the traditional labor relations with strictly wage labor relationships.

The company's attempt to impose wage labor relationships met with failure. The occupants of Brumasa's land resisted in ways reminiscent of rubber boom and depression days. For example, the occupants discovered that at times they could receive higher prices for wood by selling secretly to trading posts or compradores. Even if the prices for wood were the same or slightly lower, the trading posts and compradores offered to finance the extractors in cash or goods. An on-going credit relationship, and even a partial advancing of cash, gave the extractors an added sense of security which was considered far superior to the impersonal dealings with the timber firm. As a result, occupants began extracting timber and selling it secretly to trading posts and compradores.

To curtail this activity, Brumasa was forced to hire several overseers to patrol the land. Since these overseers were also hired as compradores with a commission earned on timber delivered to Brumasa, they had an intense interest in stopping illegal selling of timber. A few of the more zealous overseers used intimidation and violence in trying to curtail illegal selling. One notorious overseer, named Pedro Flores, became well known after he threatened a pregnant woman who fled by jumping into the water. At another time Pedro was reported to have tied a cable around a worker's house and use his boat to pull it into the water.

Although overseers like Pedro caught many people selling timber illegally (the court records in the decade of the 1970s were filled with such cases) and a significant number were expelled by the police, Brumasa was unsuccessful in halting the practice. It was not until timber reserves began to be depleted that the problem subsided. Possibly as a result of this experience, the company stopped buying land and concentrated on acquiring timber from private landowners and through compradores. This system proved to be less conflict prone and more cost effective.

Like the organization of labor for timber extraction, labor relations in Itá's sawmill industry vary considerably. There are three ways in which social relations of production are structured. The first two ways involve the small interior sawmills. For these mills the workers are either organized under a patrão and receive

provisions and some cash through a trading post, or the workers themselves own the mill. In the former case, workers are advanced merchandise and loans and then work to pay their debts. The workers earn a small percentage of market value of the wood sawn. In some, but not all cases, workers are able to earn a surplus paid in cash. In other cases, patrões manipulate the prices of food and imported goods and are able to keep workers in debt, or at least manage not to pay them in cash. Despite these drawbacks, patron-client relations are often established which offer the worker some financial and job security. Job security is especially important since the interior mills tend to close down after several years of operation. If a worker has a good patrão, work in some other sector will be provided.

Workers possessing their own sawmills organize themselves in a different fashion. These individuals are frequently small landowners who accumulated enough capital from timber extraction to purchase a diesel engine and small circular saw. Some of these individuals also have received small loans for their mills. Labor for the mill as well as for extracting timber is generally drawn from their own extended families or friends. Fictive kinship often strengthens the ties between co-workers who are not related. The profits from these mills are absorbed by the family, or partitioned out to co-workers depending on the time spent in production. Extractors are paid by a fixed rate for each log delivered. Most of these workers maintain alternative

sources of income to fall back upon, such as gardening, extraction, and livestock raising. Alternative livelihood activities are important because of the fragile nature of the lumber industry and the gradual depletion of marketable timber species.

The third form of labor organization occurred in the town sawmill. Labor relations here were the furthest removed from traditional relations. The mill paid workers an hourly wage ranging from one-half the regional minimum wage for underaged boys (from twelve to fifteen years old) to several minimum wages for adult women and men workers. At the same time, however, the sawmill ran a small company trading post which offered workers the alternative of buying goods on credit. In addition, when the company trading post could not handle demand the local stores and trading posts agreed to extend credit to the sawmill workers. This was done since the management of the sawmill were native sons of Itá who had close personal ties to the local elite. In a sense, the sawmill articulated with the traditional trading post/patron-client system. In a few cases direct patron-client relationships were established between management and workers. Management had a interest in these relationships since they were local residents who could benefit from the economic and political advantages of having clients.

The traditional economic features incorporated into the structure of the sawmill were adaptations to local needs.

For the workers there was an increased sense of security in dealing with a patrão, or pseudo-patrão, represented by management or management's ties to town elites. Credit offered by the company store or through arrangements with town stores also added to worker security. For management, the traditional features enhanced labor control as debt relations coerced labor to work. One consequence was a low turnover rate for workers. Also, management could lower the actual wages paid by price manipulation in the company trading post. Patrões and credit also smoothed over many delays in the payment of wages by the sawmill. When payment was delayed by weeks, worker loyalty remained relatively high and the cost of supporting workers was spread out among various stores and trading posts which served as a safety net.

Despite the sawmill's adaptations to the local economy, weak national and international markets and some mismanagement slowed the sawmill's production. This caused prolonged delays in workers' pay which eventually turned the workers against management. The worker-management conflict came to a climax in 1984. At the time an American named Peter Hoffman, who had married into a southern Brazilian family, owned the sawmill. He had hired several relatives of Itá's mayor to manage the mill for him. Things were running smoothly between 1983 and 1984. Peter reported he had US \$70,000 invested in the mill. At its best, the mill grossed close to US \$20,000 a month. Workers were paid

consistently on time. Then a series of mishaps occurred. First, a contractor for the sawmill bought junk wood that could not be sold. Next a shipment of lumber waiting for export turned up stained on the inside and was unmarketable. Peter reported losing US \$15,000 on the stained shipment alone. This disaster was followed by the failure of a contracted barge to show up in Itá for a large shipment. Peter lost his contract for the lumber altogether.

As these successive failures occurred, the sawmill began delaying payment to workers as well as to landowners who supplied the mill with timber. Worker's wages were first paid weekly, next bi-weekly, then by the month, and finally in 1984 wages were three months behind. Due to the large debts incurred by the sawmill's workers in the town trading posts and stores (which were compounded daily by high inflation) and the nonpayment for timber extracted from many landowners, the whole community was in an uproar. Many store owners who were themselves threatened with going out of business from unpaid debts, were forced to refuse further credit to workers. Loss of credit severely affected workers dependent on sawmill wages. For some workers a period of hunger followed as they had no money and no access to gardens for crops. All the while Peter was heavily indebted to banks and attempted to pay off these debts before paying his workers. Meanwhile, rumors arose in town that Peter had taken the worker's wages and invested in a gold mine. Others arose that he sent all his profits to the United

States. People were sure he had lots of money and was cheating his workers. Peter's practice of renting private airplanes to taxi him to and from Itá was all the proof that many workers required of his hidden wealth.

The perceived extravagance on the part of Peter and the growing hardships from nonpayment of wages led to a series of retaliations against the American. He received numerous death threats and was nearly run down by Itá's only taxi. Peter began visiting Itá less and less, and traveling with companions for protection. Finally, tensions came to a climax when a large shipment of lumber ready for delivery was set on fire. The fire started on a Saturday night and was put out by townspeople only to start up again. The second blaze burned for two days and was finally extinguished by a fire boat sent to Itá from Breves. Following the fire some looting of the mill occurred. Most people in Itá were convinced that the fire was arson. The only disagreement among them was over who set the fire-- disgruntled workers or Peter's own men to end worker's claims to the large debts owed.

After the fire at the sawmill, workers, store owners, and landowners gathered the support of local politicians to seek a legal remedy for the unpaid debts. A lawyer was hired in Breves. Slowly the courts forced Peter to begin paying his debts. In part he did so by selling machinery in the sawmill. Also, for a while he had his management run a skelton crew to saw logs to pay for debts. The managers had

hoped to buy the mill for themselves, paying US \$15,000 for it through profits from sawing wood. But shortly after the mill started up, once again wages were delayed as the mill ran into marketing problems. By 1986 the sawmill completely shut down. The remaining machinery was impounded to be sold to pay debts. With the passing of the sawmill, Itá's brief experience with hybrid wage labor in the lumber/timber sector ended. Labor organization returned to the realm of the trading post/landowner and, to a lesser extent, the semi-independent comprador.

Land Conflict and Timber Extraction

Since the late 1960s the old system of vaguely defined property boundaries and unregularized land titling utilized for rubber extraction has become increasingly obsolete in Itá. The problem initially stems from new requirements of timber extraction which demand fairly precise demarcations of land to define which stands of timber belong to which property owner. In addition, when Brumasa bought the 95,708 hectares of land in Itá the company introduced a capitalist land market which places value on the land itself instead of value only on the resources on the land. The new land market also requires precise land demarcations and proper land titling to function smoothly. The lack of precise demarcations and proper land titling have created numerous legal squabbles between Brumasa, landowners, and freguesas occupying the land. And finally, laws on land possession,

which include occupants' rights to land and/or rights to indemnifications for improvements on land, have increased conflict over ownership of land between patrões and freguesas. Although the new land rights are not a result of timber extraction, they do contribute to the tensions initially raised by the timber boom.

The first and foremost way that timber extraction generates land conflict is to call into question vague property boundaries and irregular land titling which were established during the rubber boom. Unlike rubber extraction where a permanent rubber road is all that is needed to demarcate property, extractable timber can cover the entire expanse of land and requires precise demarcation as a proof of ownership. Vague boundaries between holdings, and especially the nonexistence of back boundaries from the rivers and streams, lead to ambiguous and overlapping claims to trees. Adding to the problem are growing instances of intentional poaching of timber from other people's property, even when property boundaries are not particularly ambiguous.

In addition to these problems is the introduction of a capitalist land market which gives value to land itself, not only resources upon the land, which was the case with the colonial and rubber economies. Brumasa is the principal initiator of the land market by buying nearly 10% of Itá. Brumasa bought the land for timber extraction and also as an investment (store of value) and hedge against inflation

(ample government incentives and subsidies helped finance the purchases). The later two features are alien to the traditional economy where investments are usually made by expanding exchange opportunities (hiring more extractors) rather than purchasing land. To legalize its purchases, Brumasa needed precise land demarcations and proper land titles. Since both of these were lacking, the company resorted to the court system to clear up problems. When this proved inadequate, the company used bribes to local officials to alter or create the proper documentation needed.

The land market system introduced by Brumasa has not spread to transform the entire land tenure system in Itá. Beyond the company's purchases, only a few hundred hectares have been bought by individuals to serve as a store of value or hedge against inflation. The reasons why a larger land market system has not developed revolve around the continued economic domination of vegetable extraction and the lack of productive economies such as agriculture and cattle raising. Agriculture and pastures give value to land while extraction gives value to resources on the land. As will be seen, agriculture and pastures have not developed in Itá due to the lack of an internal market. The lack of an overland connection to the Transamazon highway which would facilitate export also limits productive economies. However, if ever Itá is connected to the Transamazon highway, then increased penetration by capitalist firms establishing pasture and

agriculture will clearly create a widespread land market in the municipality.

The growth of timber extraction has created many conflicts over timber ownership since the late 1960s until the present. Many of these conflicts end up in the court system. Itá's judge reports that in the 1970s and 1980s she has constantly held hearings on overlapping claims to timber. Sorting out the claims is next to impossible due to the legally deficient land titling system in Itá and often the lack of titles altogether. In most cases the judge tries to offer some sort of compromise and ask those involved to accept it. She rarely is able to make legally binding decisions. In some cases the judge's ruling is unacceptable to one or both parties. When a conflict reaches this level, intimidation or violence usually settles the matter.

Such is the case of Flor Gonçalves who lives on the Mojú River of the Great Island of Itá. Flor has lived on his land for nearly thirty years. He has a title to his land, although it is vague on boundary demarcations. Throughout the timber boom Flor has resisted depleting all of his timber as many of his neighbors have done. Instead, he plans to save as many trees as possible for his children to harvest. Flor also has planted cacao, orange, and rubber trees and always maintains a garden.

Flor's careful management of trees has not been shared by one of his neighbors, João Mendes. When the timber boom

started, João quickly sold all of his timber. He then became a timber comprador. When the market became difficult in the 1980s, João and his family began extracting timber from land claimed by Flor. Flor contended that they crossed over a stream which was the boundary of his property and cut a good number of trees. At first Flor complained directly to João's sons. An argument occurred and Flor's life was threatened. The poaching of trees continued. Flor next went to the judge in Itá. There a series of delays occurred since the judge was not regularly visiting Itá. When the case was finally heard there was no decision made since land titles were not sufficiently clear. A compromise was offered, but rejected by Flor since it gave João rights to extract timber on what Flor was sure was his land. Flor left the court bitter and was determined to get his own justice. He warned that any more poaching of timber would result in death. Flor armed himself and watched closely over the disputed land. Up to the time research was concluded in 1986, Flor's strategy seemed to be working as no more timber was poached.

Other cases of conflict over timber occur when timber is to be extracted from unowned land far removed from riverfronts, especially on the terra firme. In these cases land is frequently owned along the waterways which block access to the interior. Often timber extractors trespass on the privately owned land to reach distant timber stands. When this occurs, the landowner or even occupant may

complain about the trespass. In other cases, the landowner may claim ownership of the distant land since there are often no back boundaries to property. To alleviate this problem, timber compradores have begun "renting" a road (or paying a fee for access to land) from the owner of property along the waterway. If a landowner continues to object to timber extraction from the distant land that is ambiguously claimed, compradores often seek access to the timber through another landowner and ignore the protests. Policing distant timber is difficult and whichever party has more determination, political ties, success in court, or in rare cases even guns, usually wins.

A major portion of the land conflicts over timber are between individual private property owners. Some, however, occur between newly arrived timber firms, private landowners, and occupants of the contested land. There are several instances of large timber firms trying to get access to unowned land as described above (this will be examined in more detailed in the next chapter). But the largest problem has occurred on the land purchased by Brumasa. When Brumasa began acquiring land they bought it very cheaply. People in Itá had no idea of the value of the timber on their land and were pleased to get some cash for what they considered nearly useless land (Itá was still in a depression so any quick source of cash was very welcome).

One example of people selling land cheaply to Brumasa is the case of João Cruz, a successful businessman today.

In the early 1970s João sold his land on the Baquiá River to Brumasa for a low price. After selling, he moved to another piece of property on Mojú River and opened up a small store. When the timber boom began, João sold timber from his Mojú property and was able to greatly expand his operation. Looking back to his transactions with Brumasa, João lamented that if he had only known the value of timber on his Baquiá property, he would not have sold it and would have been a richer man today. Other people were not as lucky as João. Many sold all their land and moved to Itá or a larger city. Of these, most did not find employment and soon ran out of money. Since they had no land to return to, they were forced to join the growing mass of urban poor.

Brumasa has used various methods to secure the forest reserve they desired. For the most part they bought land without difficulties. Nevertheless, there were some serious problems with land titles of questionable authenticity. In addition, nearly all land titles were vague on precise boundaries and many overlapped with neighboring properties. As a result, land squabbles arose. In these cases Brumasa did not hesitate to use the court system, to use their political influence on local officials, and to use the local police force to intimidate or expel troublesome occupants.

One case of disputed ownership occurred on the Baquiá River of the Great Island of Itá. Two landowners lived adjacent to one another in a place where a river took a sharp bend. The titles of both landowners failed to specify

a back boundary to their properties which clearly overlapped due to the river's course. Up until the point when Brumasa asked to buy the land there were never conflicts between the neighbors. The approximately 100 hectares of overlapping property claims were of no concern since neither family used the land for economic pursuit beyond hunting. Brumasa's offer to buy land was accepted by one of the landowners. When the second landowner discovered the firm's intentions to cut timber from this land, he protested vigorously. The conflict ended up in Itá's court. Once in court, Brumasa's access to lawyers and its political influence resulted in an easy victory. The second landowner lost the timber on all of the disputed property.

More difficult problems for Brumasa arose on land occupied by families with no titles at all. These occupants were either living on the land of others for decades or had informally inherited the land when the owner left, especially after the rubber bust. When Brumasa attempted to buy this land they often found overlapping claims. In one case, a family claimed ownership of a fairly large area. They sold the land to Brumasa without ever producing a title. When Brumasa came to extract timber they found a second family occupying the area. This family had occupied the land for fifty years. The second family knew nothing of the land sale nor of the selling family's claims to the land. Upon learning of the deal, they refused to allow Brumasa access to the timber. Brumasa immediately commenced

legal proceedings to have the second family expelled from the land. The case remained in the court for six years and was finally decided in favor of Brumasa. The second family was forced to vacate the property.

Throughout the early 1970s Brumasa continued to buy land. When required to, they used their influence and money to shortcut the legal system. People tell of how the county records keeper (cartório) received various gifts for speeding along the processing of land titles. On a meager civil servant salary which supported him poorly for years, he was suddenly able to build one of the best houses in town and to spend a sizable amount of money on health needs. All this occurred after Brumasa came to town. People also tell of how Brumasa and the previous town mayor had a close, mutually advantageous relationship. For a portion of Brumasa's business, the ex-mayor used his influence to ensure land acquisition and extraction proceeded smoothly. This included Brumasa's easy access to the military police stationed in Itá to expel troublesome land occupants.

A third development to effect the level of land conflict in Itá, although not directly tied to timber extraction, are a series of laws giving land rights to occupants (posseiros or squatters) of the land. Laws to protect rights to land occupied and utilized have been in place since the previous century (Santos 1984). In the second half of the 20th century several laws were made that in part strengthened occupants' rights. For example, in

1970 the federal government claimed jurisdiction over all unoccupied lands in the Amazon (Santos 1984:454).

Provisions were made for any family occupying and farming or extracting on state land for a year and a day to qualify for ownership of up to 100 hectares of that land. In Itá this provision covered much of the terra firme (at present 39.3% of the land in the municipality of Itá is unclaimed, INCRA 1985). This land was largely ignored up until the 1980s when terra firme timber extraction began. As a consequence, little conflict arose with this new law.

Workers' recent awareness and use of two other laws, however, have created tension in Itá. The first law requires cash redemption or idemnifications for improvements made to land by occupants who are expelled from land by the landowner. The second gives occupants possession of 100 hectares of privately owned land if they reside and work it for a period of ten years. Use of the redemption laws cut into landowners' power over freguesas. No longer can landowners legally expel workers without paying a price. Of course many landowners simply ignore the law. Most were rarely challenged until a worker political resistance movement in the 1980s began informing occupants of their rights. Still, today landowners can count on a sluggish legal system in Itá to delay judgements on the value of land improvements and compliance to pay. Usually inflation reduces the true value of redemptions so that the landowner payes very little. Despite all these drawbacks, the laws do

afford some degree of security for landless freguesas that improvements to houses and time spent in planting crops will not be lost outright to a disapproving landowner.

Like the law on redemption, the law on occupants' rights to privately owned land has led to change in land tenure. In the 1985 land registration (INCRA 1985), fifteen individuals and two timber businesses claim 66.7% of all land privately owned or 40% of all municipal land. Most of these individuals, however, do not have proper documentation. Many lack land titles altogether. If the land is untitled, then it reverts to state control and any one working the land for one year and one day can become the legal owner. As such, these landholders are at high risk to lose their land.

This new threat to landownership has led to a concerted effort on the part of landowners to move freguesas around so they cannot qualify for land ownership. In addition, there is renewed incentive not to let freguesas plant permanent crops (cacao, rubber, palm-heart) which may be used as proof of land occupation and as a to claim land. Despite this interest in disrupting freguesa permanence and land improvements, nearly all large landowners already have numerous freguesas who easily meet the ten year residency requirement and can legally claim land. For these freguesas the threat of claiming land is a new found check on patrão power.

But there are serious limitations to this check. First, there is the overwhelming bureaucracy involved in applying for land title and challenging rights of the previous owner. Second, if land is procured, then taxes need to be paid. In Itá it is common to be delinquent in paying of land taxes. In fact, 90% of the land owners registered on the 1985 land census have back taxes due (INCRA 1985). Nevertheless, nonpayment of taxes can lead to confiscation of land, especially when individuals have angered local officials. Third, the legal claim to land is a maximum of 100 hectares. To support a family pursuing a livelihood of extraction and some subsistence agriculture, 100 hectares is often not sufficient. This is especially true as the family expands with the maturation of succeeding generations. As a result, many freguesas engaged in conflict with their patrões over land rights complain that act of claiming the 100 hectares by the freguesa is actually a victory for the landowner. A large landowner can easily afford to give up 100 hectare slices of land and still have vast tracks left while the freguesa's 100 hectares will be overexploited as the family grows by the next generation.

The persistent land conflict of the past two decades has contributed to the growing threat to worker livelihood. Although land concentration in Itá has not changed much since the rubber bust, except for Brumasa's holdings (see Table 4:1), workers' access to land has been disrupted by being expelled from land, moved around on land, and

prohibited from planting certain crops or planting in new areas. Other workers are pressured by poaching of timber on their land (whether legally owned or simply possessed). These threats combine to create a growing apprehension over access to land. The actual or perceived threat to land and resources thus join problems of resource depletion and food shortages in threatening worker subsistence.

The Rubber, Palm-Heart, and Oil Extractive Sectors

The timber boom by itself has generated the greatest growth and change in Itá's economy. But by the early to mid-1980s the beginning of local depletion of commercially valuable species and an unstable national and world market have slowed the timber sector and helped generate interest in alternative sectors of the extractive economy. One of these alternatives is a renewed interest in rubber collection, particularly after a substantial increase in price by the mid-1980s. Two other sectors which have experienced growth are palm-heart extraction and oil exploration. These will be discussed presently.

Rubber Extraction

Rubber extraction in Itá has declined since the World War II miniboom ended in 1945. From that point on the export of rubber increased until 1960, then dramatically dropped with the onset of the 1970s timber boom (see table 4:2). At this time people who had participated in rubber

Table 4:1 Land Distribution in Itá: 1985

Hectares of land owned	Percent of privately owned land	Number of land owners
1-500	5.5%	208
501-5000	27.8%	102
5001-100,000	66.7%	17
Total	100.0%	
Claimed land..... 56,5321 hectares (60.7%)		
Unclaimed land.....36,5579 hectares (39.3%)		

Source: INCRA 1985

Table 4:2 Rubber Production in Itá: 1940-1980

Year	Production in Tons
1940	416
1950	904
1960	1677
1970	538
1980	230

Source: IBGE 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980.

extraction were increasingly drawn to the high returns of timber extraction. Many seringais (rubber fields) were abandoned as people relocated to extract timber.

By 1983 this pattern began to reverse itself. Rubber prices were on the increase due to a rise in the world market price and the maintenance of import barriers imposed by the national government against foreign rubber. The price increase has made rubber extraction a profitable activity again. Rubber firms are now increasing their financing of landowners and trading post patrões, who in turn recruit workers to reopen rubber trails. Independent extractors are increasing production also. Many of these independant workers, who are small landowners, have already sold their timber and are in need of new income.

Rubber extraction in the mid-1980s is fairly similar to extraction over the last 100 years. Extraction is performed by small family units scattered throughout the interior. However, by the mid-1980s fewer people migrate seasonally to the rubber fields than before. Rubber extractors are more likely to reside the year round on the land. This occurs either because the extractors are private landowners who live on their property, or because the reduced number of people extracting means that the more accessable, better endowed land for rubber and subsistence production is utilized. This land supports a family on a year round basis. In addition, the large number of privately owned small diesel-powered boats, often purchased with timber

extraction capital, greatly reduces isolation. Even the most remote rubber tapper usually has access to a motor boat (through a relative or acquaintance) and is within a day or day and a half of Itá. This makes life in the interior more bearable.

The work cycle and technology for rubber extraction has changed very little by the mid-1980s. Each morning the rubber collector walks the four to seven kilometer trail once to cut each of the 100 to 200 trees and then again to collect the slow dripping latex from the cut. Trees are cut daily by some and every other day by others. The cut is made by a special knife (facão) which is curved on the end so as to allow a groove of certain depth to be made each time. This is a precaution against cutting too deep into the tree trunk which can kill the tree over time. In Itá the bandeira (flag) cut is used. This cut is made on a slight vertical slant, approximately twenty centimeters long. The lower end of the cut is connected to a vertical groove which leads to a tin cup. The latex drips from the cut to the cup. Successive cuts are made below or above one another. Over the years a tree is covered with ladder-like scars along the tree trunk.

The rubber latex dripping from the cut is collected and then coagulated by the rubber collector. In the 1980s this is accomplished by one of two methods. The oldest method is to smoke the latex. In a small hut a smokey fire is built. A funnel device is placed over the fire to direct the smoke

in a concentrated stream. Over the edge of this smoke stream the collector pours the liquid latex onto a long wooden paddle which rests on supports. The smoke hardens some of the liquid which remains on the paddle while the excess latex drips down into a retainer vessel. The process is continued over a period of days until a large rubber ball (bolão or pelle) weighing up to 100 kilos is formed. This ball is traded or sold by the collector. Alternatively, a collector can sell or trade the latex uncoagulated (sernambí). This brings a lower price.

The second method of coagulating rubber is to use an imported chemical solution or homemade solution made with lemon juice. The solution is poured into the latex which begins the coagulating process. The latex is then placed into a homemade wooden press which squeezes the liquid from the latex and shapes the solid rubber into cubes of varying size (usually around 40X40X15 centimeters). Pressing rubber in place of smoking it saves the rubber tapper from the unpleasant and unhealthy process of smoking rubber. It also saves time since the press needs no attention once set up. The worker leaves the press to coagulate overnight and simply removes the finished product the next day. The major drawback of pressing over smoking is a loss of elasticity when the rubber is refined. In addition, rubber tappers and traders claim that pressed rubber is more difficult to transport since it is in small cubic volumes. Pressing the rubber incorrectly also leads to low quality of rubber.

Furthermore, pressed rubber has a foul odor much worse than smoked rubber.

Rubber extraction is organized primarily as it has been in the last 100 years. The central institution is the trading post which operates under the familiar patterns of credit-debt and patron-clientship. The only major change with the trading post is the increased use of cash. Unlike before, rubber tappers are more likely to receive cash for their labor when the balance of payment is in their favor. The availability of cash, along with the overall decline of labor control by the trading post, reduces the post's potential for monopolizing worker's exchange and leaves the rubber tappers more freedom to consume where ever possible.

In addition to the trading post there are a few independent compradores buying rubber in Itá. These compradores operate much as the timber compradores. They are always agents for national firms. They generally buy rubber with cash and seldom supply merchandise or extended credit. These buyers usually deal with small landowners who have lost access to, or gained freedom from, a trading post during the economic depression. The small number of independent contractors for rubber extraction indicates that the rubber resurgence is not very strong. The volume of extraction is adequately handled by the existing social relations of production. As a result, the traditional institutions of the trading post and aviamento are maintained for the rubber sector.

Palm-heart Extraction

Palm-heart extraction, as opposed to timber and rubber extraction, is an entirely new activity for Itá. The extraction of palm-heart began in the late 1970s. By 1980 the municipality of Itá exported 380 tons of palm-heart (IBGE 1980). Palm-heart is used in salads and as an hors d'oeuvre. It is made from the top inner portion of various palm trees including the açai palm tree (*Eutrepia oleracea*). It is removed from the palm, sliced into small disks, and canned. In Itá, the entire process is accomplished near the extraction site. The palm-heart produced is then exported to the south of Brazil, France, and the United States. There is almost no local consumption.

Palm-heart extraction and canning has brought only minor technological changes to Itá. It, like timber, is accomplished with human power and axes. The palm-heart tree grows up to ten meters high, although it only obtains a maximum diameter of twenty-five centimeters. Harvesting of the tree is done by cutting the trunk at the base. Only the top meter or so of the tree is used to make palm-heart. This portion is the growing part of the tree and contains the vegetable cortex which is processed into the hors d'oeuvre. Many extractors report that it is important to cut the tree at the base. When cut at the base the root system responds and sends up spouts which produces new trees. If the tree is cut higher up, no sprouts are produced and no new trees grow from the root system.

Once cut, the raw palm-heart is sent to the canning factory. In 1986 there are two small canning operations in Itá, both located in the interior. The factories are housed in an enclosed shelter. Inside, the palm is stripped of its bark, sliced into round disks, and then separated by size. The disks are placed in a liquid solution and sealed in a tin can. The whole process utilizes few tools beyond knives and several large vats. The canning factories are easily set up in any shelter. The major risk in canning is contamination. Due to poor canning practices, some foreign importing countries refuse to buy palm-heart produced by small field factories such as those in Itá.

The two active canning factories in Itá are small enterprises employing anywhere from five to ten workers. These factories are set up in the interior close to the location of extraction. The one exception was a fairly large operation in town which operated in 1977. At its peak this factory employed thirty workers. But the factory, run by a Paulista (person from São Paulo), ran into financial troubles and the owner left town, bills unpaid. The business collapsed and until today the factory sits idle next to the abandoned sawmill.

Local management of palm-heart trees by extraction firms and most landowners in Itá is very limited. Extraction firms claim they are selective in their cuttings, only harvesting the oldest trees and leaving the younger ones to propagate the species. However, it is clear this is

not generally the practice. Most extraction firms clear-cut an area of palm-heart. The process is systematic and results in depletion of palm-heart from worked areas. Several nearby municipalities, such as Breves, have eliminated palm-heart in this way. The loss is not simply limited to eradication of an extractive crop, but also results in loss of a popular drink made from the açai palm-nuts. As will be discussed presently, palm-heart extraction eliminates açai which causes serious supply problems for this prized commodity. Even the government is concerned enough to send out scientists to collect açai seeds for a seed bank to guard against the future extinction of many varieties of the tree.

Although conservation efforts by extraction firms are practically non-existent, rural workers do plant palm-heart trees for their açai. Planting techniques are usually limited to scattering seeds around the worker's house. More rare in Itá is a systematic planting of trees. One exception is a young entrepreneur who is experimenting with açai production. This entrepreneur is Edson Povo (grandson of Jorge Povo). Edson had accompanied a government scientist on a trek through Itá to find the most productive açai trees and collect the seeds for a seed bank. With the technical advice gained from this experience, Edson bought several hectares of land just outside of town and planted 1000 açai seedlings from the seeds he had helped collect. Edson had raised the seedlings with care, planting them in

small cups containing animal excrement. When the seedlings were twenty-five centimeters high he transplanted them into the ground. The trees were planted several meters apart to protect against the easy spread of disease and pest. In the future Edson plans to expand his endeavor and to plant cacao in between açai to further reduce chances of spread of disease and pest.

Açai nuts, which grow in caches of seeds at the top of the tree, is collected by small individuals or children who climb up the thin trunks to cut and drop the caches to the ground. The job can result in injuries from falls, especially when the trees grow too high and too fragile to support the weight of the climber. In Edson's case, when the trees grow too tall he plans to cut them for palm-heart and let sprouts grow in their place or replant for more açai.

For his efforts, Edson is the source of jokes. Few people can see the logic of planting açai when it grows naturally in the jungle. But Edson responds that already there is a shortage of açai in town. Individuals who own açai presses (electrically powered machines that spin the açai seeds to remove the pulp which is then mixed with water to make the drink) have to rely on uncertain supply from the interior. Days often pass without enough açai to meet demand. The press owners claim the shortage is only temporary due to an unusually high number of toucans migrating through the area that year. The toucans feed upon

açaí. But Edson maintains that with increases in palm-heart extraction and competition from açaí buyers from neighboring municipalities who are willing to pay high prices, the shortage is sure to intensify. With his açaí farm, he hopes to cash in on the demand.

Labor organization in palm-heart extraction closely parallels the timber extraction industry. With palm-heart, labor is organized by the traditional trading post which delivers the tree to a canning firm or, in one case, has direct control over the canning process. Also, workers are organized by independent compradores, both local and non-local, who either use a landowner's workers or hire workers themselves. In most cases the control over workers by the trading post and comprador are identical to their counterparts in timber. Debt-entrapment is rare, although lower wages are earned from palm-heart extraction than from timber. Labor turnover is relatively high, especially since the work holds such low esteem in comparison to timber and rubber extraction.

During the period of research there was one case of serious worker exploitation among palm-heart extractors. The case is unusual due to its severity, but nevertheless falls within the overall range of possible social relations of production in Itá. The case involves a German comprador, nick-named Gigante (giant), who extracted for a French palm-heart exporting firm. Gigante used male workers from Breves. These workers were out of jobs and desperately

seeking work since the collapse of the sawmill industry and the depletion of palm-heart in Breves. Gigante brought the workers to Itá and put them in the jungle on the Great Island of Itá. The workers were isolated in the jungle and totally dependent on Gigante for delivery of food and other supplies. At this point Gigante began abusing the workers. When production quotas were not met due to worker slowdowns or land conflicts with occupants (see next chapter), or when there was a capital shortfall, Gigante delayed sending food and supplies to the workers. The workers were in a difficult situation. They ran short on food, but were without money and too isolated to make leaving the extraction site an easy venture. Most of them stayed and hoped for Gigante to fulfill his obligations.

This situation continued for several months. People in Itá started to comment on the desperate situation of Gigante's workers, but no one could or would intervene. Finally Gigante's business conduct got him into trouble and eventually he was fired from the French palm-heart firm. However, it was not his mistreatment of workers that got him fired. Gigante was fired because he sold his firm's palm-heart to another palm-heart firm for his own personal profit. Once Gigante was dismissed, the workers were left stranded and had to make their way back to Breves as best they could.

Oil Exploration

Like palm-heart extraction, oil exploration is a completely new extractive activity in Itá. Oil exploration began in 1982 and lasted until 1984. During this period Petrobrás, Brazil's national oil company, contracted an American oil exploration firm, Geosource, to make seismic maps of the subsoil strata surrounding Itá. The maps were used by Petrobrás to determine if drilling for oil was a worthwhile venture. After two years Geosource moved on and left their findings to Petrobrás. No immediate drilling for oil or gas in Itá was planned as the findings were not overly promising.

During its two year stay, Geosource hired approximately 400 men for manual labor. Of these men, 270 were engaged in clearing long narrow paths through the jungle. On these paths dynamite was exploded to chart shock waves passing through the substrata. The charts revealed pockets in the substrata which potentially contained oil or natural gas. The job was difficult and even dangerous (snake bites were common), but the wages paid were far superior to other unskilled jobs in the municipality. The pay was slightly above minimum wage, but if productivity was high the workers earned bonuses that could double their salaries. In addition, the firm paid the worker's federal insurance fees (INPS) and offered a health post. The health post treated a number of injuries, including seven poisonous snake bites in the first year. Geosource claimed it spent US\$ 2000 a month

in medical supplies alone. The work schedule devised by Geosource was two months in the jungle followed by ten days off. This schedule allowed men to return home to visit and help care for their gardens if their family was maintaining them.

Due to the high pay, benefits, and work schedule, Geosource had little trouble attracting large numbers of workers. At the same time, Geosource could not retain workers for extended periods of time. They had a high turnover rate of 30% per month. Men tended to work for a few months then take a few months off until their savings ran out. At this point many asked for their jobs back. The highest turnover rates were near festival time. Geosource's management reported that the months of June and July (Saint Anthony, Saint John, Saint Peter) and the month of December (Saint Benedict) were the most difficult to retain the work force at full strength.

Geosource's inability to retain workers was related to the difficulties experienced by the independent timber compradores. For example, Geosource's control over workers was simply through offering wages. There were no credit-debt ties established to obligate people to work. Workers were also somewhat alienated from the firm due to the lack of patron-client ties. As an alternative, many workers sought to establish these relationships with store owners or trading posts in town. These ties were seen as crucial for survival since they offered future security for

workers and their families when there was a need for health care, education, food, clothes, or small loans. Geosource could not be counted on to provide these services, beyond immediate health care for the worker (not the family). When Geosource left Itá in 1984, it left behind nothing for the worker's future beyond wages paid.

In addition, the labor force hired by Geosource was not separated from the means of production (land, water). Most workers had families maintaining subsistence gardens and there were always opportunities to hunt and fish. This allowed workers the freedom of refusing to work for wages in companies such as Geosource if they so desired. Many workers actually worked only long enough to save money for consumption items, to save money for emergencies, or to save money for festival time. Beyond these needs, compulsion to work for wages was minimal.

The Productive Sector

The productive sector in Itá consists mainly of food production. Subsistence agriculture, cattle raising, and other forms of small animal husbandry are the principal activities, although there has been a small development in jute farming originating in the 1970s. During the 1964-1986 period the productive sector has undergone a few minor changes. Government sponsored programs for small farmer/rancher loans, colonization projects, and technical advice led to modest increases in production during the late

1960s and early 1970s. Yet, as of 1986, no food producing program has had sustainable results. In fact, the timber boom of the 1970s and 1980s drained so much labor from the agricultural sector that there was a substantial drop in food production by 1980 (see Table 4:3). This drop in food production between 1970 and 1980 occurred simultaneously with a population increase of 14.6% for the municipality. The result was an increased dependence on imported food for certain portions of the population.

The historic problem of labor drain to extraction has left food production as a weak adjunct sector. The secondary status of food production is indicated by the total value of the extractive sector versus the agricultural sector in 1980. Extraction earned 298,412,000 cruzeiros while agricultural activities earned 17,966,000 cruzeiros, a difference of seventeen fold. A discussion of the subsistence agriculture, cattle ranching, and jute sectors of the productive economy will follow.

Agriculture

During the period 1964-1986, agricultural production in Itá has continued to be conducted by the traditional system of slash-and-burn agriculture. Slash-and-burn agriculture (also called shifting cultivation and swidden agriculture) was developed by the Amazonian Indians and passed on to present day populations. The technique, as employed in the 1964-1986 period on the terra firme, involves the cutting of

TABLE 4:3 Food Production in Itá in Tons: 1940-1980

	Manioc	Rice	Beans	Corn	Sugar Cane
1940	6372	121	66	123	3162
1950	3961	131	18	95	22
1960	3956	382	94	666	16
1970	10048	384	28	-	39
1980	3092	14	21	51	150

Source: IBGE 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980

a small area of jungle, the drying of the plant remains, the burning of the remains to release nutriments into the soil, and then planting (see Wagley 1976:67 and Moran 1981:118-136 for further discussion). After two or three years of farming, the area is abandoned and allowed to revert to jungle growth. The same area can be refarmed after a period of two to twenty years, depending on the quality of land and availability of alternative land. In the meanwhile, the cycle is initiated in another area so that as one garden is abandoned another is ready to produce.

As recent scientific research has shown (see Moran 1981:54, 114-118), slash-and-burn agriculture practiced in low population density areas is a very efficient and potentially non-destructive form of agriculture for tropical soils and ecology. For example, the burning of the plants serves as an important fertilizer, supplying such nutriments as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium which are usually in low quantities in Amazonian soils. In addition, burning kills fungi, nematodes, pathogenic bacteria, weeds, parasites, insects, and chases off other plant predators. The heating of the soil also increases nitrification which allows crops planted to absorb nitrogen over a longer period of time, and the ash raises the pH of the acid tropical soils (Moran 1981:54).

Under ideal conditions, a garden is cropped for only two to three years then allowed a long fallow period which can easily be twenty years in length. The garden's

dimensions are kept small and the plots widely scattered. These techniques guard against excessive loss of productive soil due to erosion from heavy tropical rains and ensure adequate regrowth of the jungle once the garden is abandoned. Also, the continuous shifting and isolation of the garden provide protection from a buildup of plant predators and diseases.

On the terra firme interior of Itá, slash-and-burn agriculture is practiced under near ideal conditions. Population density is low, 1.1 people per square kilometer (IBGE 1980), and ample land is available. In the immediate vicinity of the town of Itá, however, ideal conditions do not exist. The population is relatively dense, not mobile, and access to land is restrained due to property ownership. As a result, garden plots are often in close proximity and fallow periods are often as short as two years. In addition, over 350 years of use has seriously depleted the soils. As a result, the ecosystem is simplified and the variety and yields of crops seriously reduced. In fact, only manioc grows on this land. Also, the land is plagued by leaf cutting ants and other pests and diseases. Each of these problems contributes to the frequent food shortages for the townspeople.

In Itá slash-and-burn agriculture is practiced not only on the terra firme, but also on the non-tidal várzea. A major difference on the várzea is the very short fallow periods needed for soil recuperation and even the

possibility of annual cropping. This is due to the yearly flooding which deposits enriched silt that overcomes the tendency of Amazon soils to be rapidly depleted of nutrients. The major drawback is that várzea agriculture must be timed with the flood stages of the river. As the growing season is limited to three to four months a years on many parts of the várzea, only quick maturing crops are raised.

In the terra firme garden plots the crops planted include manioc, corn, pumpkin squash, rice, beans, bananas, pineapples, watermelons, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, onions, and tobacco. In addition, fruit trees such as orange, lemon, jambô (rose apple), açaí palm, coconut, guava, papaya, passion fruit, and Brazil nut trees are planted. Some cacao and rubber trees are also planted. All of these trees are maintained and their respected fruits or latex harvested long after the plot has been abandoned.

Of all the crops planted, manioc is the most important and always takes up the major portion of the garden. There are many varieties planted in Itá. Each garden includes several types to protect against disease. One major distinction is between bitter manioc and sweet manioc (macaxeira). Sweet manioc does not contain prussic acid and does not require a specialized technology to extract it. It also produces a flour that is used to make cakes. Despite this attractiveness, people in Itá plant far less macaxeira than bitter manioc.

By contrast, in the várzea gardens the crops are generally limited to quick growing corn, rice, beans, and pumpkins. Manioc, which takes one to two years to mature, does not grow on the várzea due to flooding and excessive moisture from high water tables.

The technology and work cycle involved in agriculture are essentially unchanged from the system described by Wagley (1976:65-8) in 1948. The only minor innovation observed is the use of heavy plastic sacks for transportation. As in 1948, the returns for agriculture in the 1964-1986 period continue to be minimal. The prices paid for manioc and other food stuffs are low. In addition, many trading posts prefer not to deal in cash, but barter for food. This tends to lower the price further. As a result, any family trying to live exclusively by farming, such as Pedro Chaves' family mentioned earlier, find it difficult to accumulate capital for consumer goods or emergency needs. Attempts to increase production to earn more profit do not necessarily ameliorate the situation for two reasons. First, finding a patrão to finance agricultural production is nearly impossible. Trading post patrões are not interested in long term, low return investments in agriculture when short term, higher returns can be earned in extraction. Inflation also discourages investment in agriculture. For a crop such as manioc, which takes from one to two years to mature, by the time a farmer

is ready to repay loans inflation has increased the principal of the loan anywhere from 200% to 400%.

Second, the internal market for food in Itá is so underdeveloped that farmers find it very difficult to find outlets for their surplus production. Most trading posts refuse to buy produce in excess of the immediate needs of their freguesas. If their freguesas are self-sufficient in food production at the time, there is no market at all. The only alternative for farmers is to trade with regatões or marreteiros (river boat merchants). These merchants, however, are usually more interested in extracted commodities than food and pay very low prices.

The lack of an internal market for food in Itá also played a primary role in the failure of several government programs implemented to boost food production. These programs, offered under Operation Amazon and PIN, provided for small farmer loans and the establishment of an agricultural colony. The small farmer loan program began in the late 1960s. The loans were distributed out of the Banco do Brasil (Bank of Brazil) located in Breves. Nearly anyone with title to land was eligible. The money was intended to increase acreage in production and to encourage use of new seed, fertilizers, and pesticides. Many farmers, or patrões of farmers, took the loans and increased production. Most of the increase in food production in the 1970 census resulted from this program. However, interest in agriculture peaked within a few years. Farmers

discovered that it was difficult to market all their produce. At the same time, the increase in food production lowered crop prices even further than usual.

There were other problems with the loan program which helped lead to failure. For example, there was no technical advice on how to improve crop yields. Most farmers simply increased land in production without having access to new seed, fertilizers, or pesticides. In addition, there was no supervision of how the loans were applied. Much of the loan money was redirected to a variety of projects, some having little to do with agriculture. In the worst case one of the town drunks obtained a loan and simply used the money to support his alcohol addiction.

A second attempt to boost agricultural production involved the building of eighteen kilometers of road into the interior. Along this road the previous mayor of Itá arranged to settle several peasant farming families from Maranhão. Interestingly, few Itaenese could be persuaded to participate in the project. Those that did participate, like the Azevedos mentioned earlier, acquired land within walking distance of the town. The Maranhenses (people from Maranhão) were placed over five kilometers from town. There they produced crops for a couple of years and then left the project. They claimed the colonization project was not viable since little provision was made for transportation, extended credit, and market outlets for produce.

By the early 1970s both the loan and colonization programs were discontinued. Their impacts in Itá were minimal. Also by this time, attention turned toward timber extraction. Labor was drawn away from agriculture and production dropped below the 1940 level for many crops.

By the 1980s low prices, lack of developed markets, and insufficient credit once again has restricted agricultural production. Most people now farm for subsistence and sell only a small surplus if any at all. Other income is earned by some extractive activity. A result of this pattern is frequent food shortages, and food importation for certain portions of Itá's population lacking a garden. Most often these are town dwellers, residents of the tidal várzea, and individuals who opt to work full time in extraction.

The social relations of production for subsistence agriculture are managed primarily through the trading post. There are two types of arrangements with farmers. The first involves farmers living on a patrão's land. These individuals pay rent for use of the land. The rent is most frequently paid in extracted commodities since most farming families have members participating in extraction during half of the year. The extractive activity, in these cases, is viewed as the primary activity which is taxed. Agriculture, by contrast, holds a secondary status and is usually only for the farming family's maintenance.

The second arrangement is between a trading post and autonomous farmer (small landowner or occupant of unowned

terra firme). The trading post owners usually agree to trade for only the amount of food needed to supply their freguesas. This practice leaves the farmer in a precarious situation when demand for food is low. Barter is the principle form of payment. Due to the traditional mark-up in prices in the trading post, there are few consumer goods the farmer can afford to trade for with food production.

Cattle Ranching

Since the 18th century natural pastures located on the várzea lands of Itá have been used to raise cattle. The size of these lands, however, is fairly limited so Itá never became a developed cattle raising center. Today there are thirty-four fazendas (ranches) which raise 1642 head of cattle and 5600 head of water buffalo for the entire municipality (IBGE 1980). In addition, milk, butter, cheese, and cottage cheese are produced in small quantities. Beef is consumed locally or sent to surrounding towns while all dairy products are consumed locally. Due to the small amount of beef produced for the local market, there is seldom enough beef to satisfy demand in the town or interior. Demand is always high since beef is a highly prized food. Beef has a much higher status than fish, poultry, or pork which are considered by Itaenses as foods of the commoners. Yet, the only time when there is a sure supply of beef in town is during the festivals when the

local elite find it politically expedient to make an extra effort to have a good beef supply on hand.

During the 1970s PIN released loans through the Bank of Brazil and sent out extension agents to help increase small scale cattle ranching. Several cattle ranchers in Itá seized the opportunity to incorporate innovations and expand production. The natural várzea pastures were expanded and several attempts were made to plant terra firme pastures with grasses developed by government research. In addition, new breeds of cattle and water buffalo (for várzea pastures) were introduced along with the occasional use of vaccines and medicine for the animals. The results of these activities were mixed. Although capital was made available for ranchers, it was seldom accompanied by qualified technical advice. Far too infrequently did government extension agents from SAGRI (State Secretariat of Agriculture) make a trip to Itá. Most ranchers, therefore, had to rely on their own skills and observations to determine the proper implementation, care, and maintenance of cattle, buffalo, and pastures. As a result, by 1980 cattle production had actually dropped and by 1986 most terra firme pastures had failed. However, the introduction of water buffalo increased total bovine numbers by over 380% to 7237 by 1980 (see Table 4:4).

Despite overall increases in bovine production, there continues to be a chronic shortage of beef available. Part of the problem is related to politics. In an attempt to

TABLE 4:4 Bovine and Milk Production in Itá: 1940-1980

Year	Ranches	No. of Cattle	No. of Buffalo	No. of Mil Cows	ML Milk
1940	33	2039	-	750	479
1950	15	1899	-	762	214
1960	11	1034	-	296	-
1980	34	1600	5600	420	110

Source: IBGE 1940, 1950, 1960, 1980.

assure beef can be bought by even the poor of Itá, the prefeitura (municipal government) maintains beef prices at very low rates. The prefeitura also charges a tax on each head of cattle sold. Many ranchers feel the low prices and tax charged do not compensate for production costs, let alone generate profit. Many refuse to sell in Itá, especially since much better prices can be obtained in neighboring municipalities. The municipality of Itá does levy an export tax to encourage beef to be sold locally. But frequently ranchers bypass the tax and smuggled their cattle out of Itá.

In 1984 the persistent lack of beef motivated one small group of individuals to rustle cattle from the Jarí Plantation and sell the beef in Itá. Jarí's cattle were poorly guarded, making thievery as simple as pulling a boat up to the land where cattle were grazing and coaxing them into the boat with grass. Itá's cattle rustling ring successfully supplied Itá with beef for nearly half a year. When the ring was finally uncovered and members arrested, Itá's principal supply of beef ended and the town again suffered chronic shortages.

On the várzea, cattle raising is on natural grass pastures. As new types of grass have become available, some ranchers have experimented with intermixing the imported grass with natural grass with satisfactory results. On the terra firme, pasture formation is less satisfactory. As has been shown by recent research, pastures on terra firme

encounter a wide range of ecological limitations. Among these are rapid nutriment depletion, soil compaction, erosion, and weed invasion (Hecht 1983:173-6). These constraints often reduce the profitable use of a pasture to five years (Hecht 1984:388). Areas cleared for pastures are also frequently too large to permit recolonization by plant species which are essential for the soil to recover. As a result, many of these lands are lost to human use (Goodland and Irwin 1975; Denevan 1973). Of the few terra firme pastures attempted in Itá, nearly all have failed within a decade. At present these pastures do not support cattle and show signs of serious weed invasion.

One exception to the general failure of terra firme pasture is the case of a rancher from Itá who has a pasture in a neighboring municipality. This rancher, Benedito Santos, had the rare opportunity to talk with an extension agent passing through the neighboring municipality. The agent instructed Benedito to treat his pasture as a slash-and-burn garden plot. He was to clear only a part of his land for pasture, graze his cattle for seven years, then allow the pasture to remain fallow for at least four years. In the meanwhile another pasture was to be created and used. Benedito was warned that only by shifting his pasture would he have any success at sustainable production. Benedito was thankful for the advice since he had planned to plant his entire property in pasture all at one time.

Cattle raised for beef in Itá are generally a mixture of Indian Brahma and creole stocks. There are also a growing number of water buffalo. Several ranches use horses to control cattle. The várzea pastures, which range in size from 100 to over 1000 hectares, require little maintenance beyond burning them every few years. The burning, as with slash-and-burn agriculture, helps control pests and releases some nutriments into the soil. No fertilizer is used. The one major obstacle to várzea ranching is seasonal flooding. On the various islands of Itá pastures flood anywhere from a few centimeters to two meters during the peak flood period. In many cases ranchers lose large numbers of cattle which cannot adjust to living in water. There are raised corrals (marumbas) to give the herds a dry place to sleep at night. Cows are also milked on the marumbas. But the cattle have to enter the water to feed during the day. One rancher commented that his herd grows from the birth of calves each summer only to be reduced by the floods of the winter. Water buffalo are more resistant to high water. One major draw back with buffalo, however, is the undesirable taste of the meat. Many people in Itá refuse to eat buffalo meat.

As an interesting footnote, many várzea ranchers commented that cabyvara hunting is always good on the ranches. It seems that the cabyvara (a large rodent) like to graze on the same grasses as cattle, and actually prefer the wet environment. No one in Itá, however, has

considered the possibility of raising semi-domesticated cabyvara, perhaps in place of cattle. The Brazilian government has several successful experimental projects of captive cabyvara breeding. Given all the hazards of raising cattle, cabyvara raising might be an interesting experiment. In addition, capyvara meat is preferred to buffalo meat in Itá.

The social relations of production of cattle ranching parallel that of other economic activities. On the larger ranches, workers are paid through the trading post. Food, tools, and other materials are deducted and surplus salary, if there is any, is paid in cash. The custom of paying ranch workers with a few of the newborn animals each year, which is the standard form of payment in other areas of Brazil, is not a common practice in Itá. On the smaller ranches workers are often members of the owner's family. Profits are distributed within the family according to varying personal arrangements.

Subsistence Fishing and Hunting

In addition to subsistence agriculture, most rural workers also fish and hunt. Both fishing and hunting serve as important sources of protein. This is made all the more important since the staple food, manioc, is very low in protein content and also low in protein quality (Gross 1975:528). Other sources of protein, such as poultry, pork, beef, rice, and beans, are not produced or consumed in large

quantities in Itá. Fishing is done in the Amazon River, in smaller tributaries and streams, and in swamps and seasonal ponds created by the receding river. The principal forms of fishing are pole fishing, gigging or lancing, trapping, and after the 1960s, gill net fishing. Both pole fishing and gigging result in small yields and are mainly done to supplement the family diet. Trapping and gill net fishing, by contrast, can result in much higher yields, especially during the dry season when water levels are low and fish are more concentrated.

In general, three types of traps are used in Itá. One of the most common is the tapagem (see Wagley 1976:75). Tapagem is a fish weir used in the tidal várzea where the daily rising and falling of water levels can be utilized to trap fish. Timbô poison (from the root or bark of the shrub-like tree) is often used in conjunction with tapagem to kill or stun fish. Upon absorbing timbo the fish float to the surface where they are collected. Fish caught by timbo retain a slight taste from the poison. People remark that one has to be used to the taste or the fish will create stomach problems. In fact, most people in poor health and sometimes the young defer from eating this type of fish.

A second kind of fish trap is the cacurí (see Wagley 1976:74). It is a permanent trap consisting of a wall of tall stakes sunk into the river bottom and tied together by vines. On the end of the trap is a round containment area. Fish swim upstream near the bank, enter the trap, and swim

along the wall until they enter the containment area where they are caught. The fisher empties the trap once a day. In the dry season, cacurís produce a surplus of fish that can be marketed in town, either as fresh catch, salted, or dried. In the wet season, however, high waters scatter fish, and production from cacurís often drops to the point where they barely provide fish for the owner. Despite the seasonal nature of fish catches, the popularity of cacurís has steadily increased since the 1940s. With the introduction of diesel boat travel, many traps are built in previously unfished areas. In 1986 there are over twenty cacurís within ten kilometers of the town of Itá.

The third type of trap is the matapí. The matapí is a small porous cylinder trap made of bamboo strips used to catch shrimp. The trap is usually around seventy centimeters in length and thirty in diameter. The matapí is primarily used in the main channels of rivers during the shrimping season between June and August. To use the trap one secures it with a line to a stake or another object protruding above water level and lets it sink underwater. Inside the matapí is bait for shrimp, usually dried babaçu fruit. Shrimp swim into an opening on the end of the matapí and are entrapped. After being retrieved by the fisher, shrimp are taken from the trap through a door in the side.

Despite the wide use of fish traps, pole fishing, and gigging, the gill net produces the greatest yields of fish

in the 1980s. Gill nets are made of cotton twine or multifilament nylon. They are generally ten meters in length by 1.5 meters in width and are made with meshes of ten to twelve centimeters up to eighteen. The trap is used by securing the ends to tree, pole, or even some floating vegetation. When in the water the net is supported by a variety of floats (styrofoam, plastic bottles) strung along the top. Fish are caught as they swim into the net and entangle themselves. People often use gill nets overnight. Yields from night fishing vary by season and luck. Sometimes as much as forty kilos can be gathered, while at others only a kilo or so is obtained.

There are various drawbacks to gill fishing. First is the constant damage to nets. Frequently, large fish or piranha will tear the nets. Also on occasion a freshwater dolphin (boto) will be entangled and cause considerable damage. Since the nets are used by workers with limited capital reserves, any repair costs are hard to cover. A second drawback comes from the very success of gill net fishing. As more and more nets are utilized, and as the population of Itá increases, the toll on fish populations is felt. This problem is further complicated by commercial fishing above Itá, increased siltation of water (caused by deforestation upstream), and the reduction of certain fruits such as açaí which fall into the water and feed fish. Fishers complain of the reduction in fish yields which they have witnessed. In their view, fish yields are down because

the nets are scattering or scaring off fish, rather than as a result of overfishing.

For the várzea populations and the town people, fish is the principal source of animal protein. There are always a few chickens, ducks, geese, and pigs raised (see Table 4:5), but these are secondary sources of protein which are frequently used only for special occasions or as a store of value to be slaughtered and sold when cash is needed. For the populations further removed from the várzea, however, fish are more difficult to procure. These terra firme groups often trade for salted or dried fish, or travel several kilometers to streams where they can fish themselves. In the more remote terra firme settlements, hunting replaces fishing as the principal source of protein. All rural workers of both the várzea and terra firme hunt when game can be found. However, it is only in the isolated terra firme where human population is less dense that hunting provides a steady supply of protein.

People usually hunt with shotguns, although some traps and snares are used for small animals. Other animals, such as tortoises and armadillos, are simply picked up or beaten to death. People from Itá hunt nearly all types of animals found in the area. There are some restrictions or taboos on hunting and eating certain game (see Galvão 1955:105-6,120; Wagley 1976:77). However, these restrictions on hunting are often ignored, especially when protein sources are low.

Table 4:5 Poultry, Goat, and Swine Production in Itá: 1980

Type of animal	No. of animals
Chickens	14,722
Turkeys	360
Ducks and Geese	3,725
Goats	61
Pigs	7,610

Source: IBGE 1980

Among the species hunted in Itá are: tapir, otter, peccary, coatimundi, agouti, howler monkey, tortoise, river turtles, caiman, manatee, toucan, macaw, squirrel monkey, night monkey, paca, tree sloth, anteater, armadillo, and deer. In addition, many cats have been hunted for their skins even after the legal end to the skin trade in the 1970s. Since much of the Amazonian fauna is nocturnal, hunting is often at night. Most hunters use flashlights to blind animals. Blinding game greatly increases chances of a successful shot.

Many rural workers do not possess their own shotgun due to the high costs. But these individuals often have access to guns which are borrowed from relatives and friends. When a shotgun is loaned, the borrower buys the shells and also often gives part of the kill to the gun owner. The rest of the meat is divided among relatives and neighbors (as far as the meat goes) with a major portion staying with the hunter. People in the small terra firme hamlets are quite aware of what meat goes where. When a household is bypassed, gossip or direct protest is sure to follow.

Beyond farming, fishing, and hunting, all rural workers collect wild fruits and nuts growing in the jungle. Given the low level of vegetable consumption in Itá, vitamins obtained from fruit are an important supplement to the diet. These fruits are collected the year round as they come into season. They are eaten raw, boiled, and made into sauces or fruit drinks (refresco). Among the fruits collected are:

abiu, açai, bacaba, bacabão, biribá, Brazil nuts, cacao, cajú, cupuaçú, goiaba, graviola, jenipapo, marí, pupuhna, and tucumã. Of particular value in Itá is açai. The drink made from açai is often consumed with manioc flour and sugar. Açai drink is a highly desired drink, often referred to as the "milk of the Amazon." It is a filling drink with some nutritional value, especially vitamin A (Moran 1981:105).

Urban Job Sector

Another area to experience change during the 1964-1986 period is the urban job sector. As development programs were created by the state and federal government, new agencies were needed to administer them. New agencies meant new civil servant positions which paid wages. The new agencies to appear in Itá include FUNRURAL (Fundo de Assistência ao Trabalhador Rural or Assistance Fund for Rural Workers, also pays retirement pension); SESPA (Secretaria de Estado de Saude Pública or State Secretary of Public Health); SUCAM (Superintendência de Campanhas or Superintendency of Campaigns, charged with control of malaria, yellow fever, etc.); SEDUC (Secretaria de Estado de Educação or State Secretary of Education); MOBREAL (Movimento Brasileiro de Alfabetização or Brazilian Movement for Adult Literacy); INCRA (Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária or National Insititute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform); CELPA (Centrais

Elétricas do Pará or Electrical Centers of Pará); and Telepará (Telefones do Pará or Telephones of Pará). In addition to government administrative positions, new jobs have been added in the health sector with the construction of the hospital, in the education sector with the opening of approximately ninety rural based schools, and with the Bank of Itaú. In all, approximately 150 new part or full time jobs have been created.

In addition, government development efforts along with national and international capital's dealings have turned Itá's once cashless economy into one dependent on currency. As discussed above, cash makes its way into Itá through timber extraction (which pays workers in both goods and cash), palm-heart extraction, the sawmill, Petrobrás, as well as through civil servant jobs, and FUNRURAL's retired person's pension. From FUNRURAL, approximately 800 elderly inhabitants receive the equivalent of US \$20-25 a month. In addition, in 1985 Itá's first bank opened, the Bank of Itaú. The bank specializes in short term personal loans. The loans have gone to the local trading posts and to timber compradores. With the bank, government, and private sector's capital "flooding" Itá, commercial transactions have been modified. A number of new small stores have sprung up in town which deal primarily in cash instead of credit, or extend credit only until the end of the month when salaries are paid. In the interior, rural workers with

cash deal increasingly with regatões or town stores and bypass the trading post.

Migration

Despite the increased economic activity of the timber boom, palm-heart extraction, rubber resurgence, and loans for agriculture and cattle raising, a large number of Itaenses continue to leave the municipality to seek employment elsewhere. The extent of migration is indicated by the 9% random sample survey of families in town in 1985 which revealed that 70% had siblings living in other municipalities. As in the pre-1964 period, migration is undoubtedly due to push factors such as harsh working conditions in Itá, the lack of secure jobs, and low wages or prices for agricultural goods. Also, pull factors are at work as families leave to seek education for their children beyond the sixth grade, jobs for their young, improved health services, or simply the "movimento" of the larger city. Another reason is the promise of good paying jobs opening up with several nearby large projects. During the 1964-1986 period there have been three major projects drawing people from Itá: the Jarí tree plantation, the sawmill-mining complexes at Macapá, and the sawmills at Breves. In addition, some people have left to work in Belém, along the Transamazon highway, and in gold mines of southern Pará.

One interior hamlet to be heavily affected by migration is the farming community of Jocojó. When Wagley visited Jocojó in 1948 he reported the hamlet had a total of nineteen houses. In the years following the hamlet grew to contain approximately forty houses. The number peaked in the early 1970s. At that time the hamlet's residents learned of the Jarí plantation. Jarí was actively recruiting labor in Itá. In the 1970s several boats made weekly stops at Itá on their way to Jarí (this direct Jarí-Itá connection has now stopped). A few individuals from Jocojó ventured to the plantation and found steady wage-labor jobs. In addition, they found the excitement and movimiento of Jarí's growing towns. When the news returned to Jocojó, more families decided to try their luck at the tree plantation. Some went on a temporary basis and returned home while others made Jarí their permanent homes.

Gabriel Lopes, a Jocojó resident who has remained in Itá, told of Jarí's affect on the hamlet. According to Gabriel, Jocojó had grown to its limits in the 1960s. The land surrounding the community was being utilized to its capacity (the land was bordered by swamp which cut off access to more distant land). At the same time the prices for manioc and other food crops were miserably low. As the opportunity to work for wages at Jarí became known, nearly half of the households left Jocojó permanently by 1986 and another five or six individuals continue to migrate seasonally to extract timber at Jarí.

The story of Jocojó can be repeated for many interior neighborhoods or hamlets of Itá. When there is a hope of a better future, many people do not hesitate to leave their homes. There are several patterns of migration. Most often young men leave on a temporary basis and return home after a few months with wages. The more adventurous may make the long trip to the gold mines in southern Pará. The gold mines always hold the greatest promise of enrichment, but this promise is tempered with realizations of the dangers involved. Disease is rampant in the gold mining camps. Many people return to Itá with malaria, dysentery, hepatitis, and other contagious diseases. A few have died in the gold fields.

A second pattern of migration is for a family to leave for a few years and then return. Reasons for returning to Itá are varied. Quite a few returned when Jarí was purchased by a Brazilian consortium and wages were slashed. Others returned when sawmills closed down or other job opportunities ran out. These families returned to Itá where they had relatives and some minimal assurance of access to land or possibly even wage work.

A third pattern is permanent migration. Many of these individuals do, however, keep in contact with their relatives in Itá. Letters are sent and even telephone calls made. Once established, these individuals who have permanently migrated become important parts of a family network linking town and country. Exchanges between members

are common. The rural family sends manioc or fruit to the city family. The latter obtains and sends medicine or consumer items which are only available in the larger town or are much cheaper in price. These networks also serve to support members when traveling and in need of a place to stay. This proves most important when rural relatives are sick and need medical treatment available only in the city. Relatives provide room and board for free, a cost that would otherwise keep individuals from Itá from attempting the trip and the treatment. These networks also allow a rural family to send their young to be educated in the larger towns. In return, the urban family members retain a "home" to fall back upon if jobs are lost or other troubles arise. They also have a place to stay during vacation time when it is customary for city people to travel to the interior.

The Future

The economic changes Itá has experienced in the 1964-1986 period promise to be both limited and ecologically destructive. As in the past, extraction largely proceeds until resources are depleted. Such is the probable future of timber and palm-heart extraction. Management of resources is virtually non-existent. New booms occur only as new resources are discovered (a plan to produce pig iron with charcoal burning smelters at Jarí, for example, may produce a new boom for charcoal producing wood in Itá). Yet, with each boom and depletion cycle the environment is

altered and creates increasing limitations on future human use (Bunker 1985:55). A recent and highly visible sign of this process is the depletion of andiroba and viola trees resulting in the elimination of the andiroba and acuuba seed trade from Itá. This pattern of predatory extraction will likely continue given the national concerns with fostering industrial development in the south and paying international debts.

On a social level, recent economic changes have also been limited. For example, economic prosperity brought about by the boom has increased employment and allowed increased consumption of certain imported goods. Yet, employment is largely in extraction which is low paying and physically wearing. In addition, increased consumption is offset by knowledge of greater gains made in other communities (via travel and mass media) where employment, health care, education, and the general standard of living are much better. There is another, greater problem that offsets any recent gains made during the boom. This is the increasing threat to worker livelihood. This threat is a cumulation of factors including continual depletion of extracted resources (timber, oleaginous seeds, palm-heart), continual reduction of wild game (an old problem) and fish (a new problem), persistent limitations on agricultural production and marketing, increasing competition with timber companies and others for access to resources and land, inflation, loss of trading posts and credit opportunities,

lack of wage labor jobs in the urban sector, and population growth. As a result, there is a widespread feeling of relative deprivation and growing frustration which is demonstrated by the low opinion of Itá given by residents (see Chapter Two). One of the many results of this perception is continuous migration, draining Itá of its human resources.

Economic changes have created some ambiguity and conflict with social relations of production. Despite the penetration of capitalist firms and a cash economy, Itá's social relations of production continue to be dominated by the institution of the trading post. Attempts to side-step the trading post, as in the cases of Petrobrás and Brumasa, have met with serious problems of labor turnover and poaching of resources. Capitalist hybrids, such as the town sawmill, which incorporated debt-credit and patron-client ties along with wage labor have proved more successful. In the near future the trading post and hybrid capitalist form of social relations of production will likely dominate. They are most efficient and cost-effective given current circumstances. These traditional and semi-traditional forms of production relationships, however, may be challenged by two developments. The first is the large-scale penetration of the area by capitalist firms which will occur if Itá receives an overland connection to the Transamazon Highway. If this is the case, then radical change as witnessed along the Transamazon highway will occur (see, for example Velho

1972; Ianni 1978; Schmink and Wood 1984). The second is the development of worker's cooperatives which can by-pass the trading post. By 1986 there have been several attempts to develop workers' cooperatives. This novelty will be examined in the next chapter.

Economic changes have also created ambiguity and conflict over land and resource ownership. The timber boom and Brumasa's introduction of a market value in land has called into question vague and undocumented land possession. This trend will continue if economic growth continues. With the introduction of a overland connection, the problem would likely explode with violence. Also, with recent land tenure laws granting occupant rights in land (squatter's rights), there is also great potential for land conflict. This potential will be covered in the following chapter.

In summation, the economic future of Itá does not appear promising. On the contrary, there is great potential for ecological chaos and social conflict. These features of the economy have been present ever since European colonization. Yet, they are being intensified by government efforts to "develop" the Amazon for national interests in the south. Whether these development efforts can result in sustained prosperity for Itá, or create conditions leading to conflict and violence will be revealed in the forthcoming decades.

CHAPTER V:
POLITICAL CHANGE IN ITÁ: 1964-1986

Between 1964 and 1986 the political system of Itá has undergone radical changes. During this period the traditional dominant class, composed of merchants, landowners, and a few government officials, has gradually lost political hegemony of the municipality. Rising to challenge the dominant class is a nascent worker's movement composed of the rural extractors and farmers. As the strength of the worker's movement grows, there have been a number of demonstrations contesting the political and economic status quo. These demonstrations include collective resistance against landowner and trading post patrão abuses, claims to occupant rights in land, success in union organizing, and success in municipal elections. By the end of the research period in 1986 the worker's movement, which is still in its infancy, has generated substantial hope and fear that structural reform in politics as well as economics will be forthcoming.

The political change in Itá has been precipitated by three important political-economic changes on the national, regional, and local levels. First among these changes are the economic factors discussed in the preceding chapter. These factors have the paradoxical effect of increasing

local consumption of imported goods while simultaneously increasing threats to worker livelihood (depletion of resources, land conflicts, loss of credit sources for workers, lack of wage labor jobs in the urban sector). A second change has been the policy of national political centralization and elimination of the opposition forces following the military coup of 1964. The result in Itá has been the entrenchment of a particular elite faction in power for eighteen years.

The third change is the political abertura (opening) which began in the early 1980s when the military government allowed limited political dissent. In Itá the "abertura" has enabled opposition factions to organize and challenge the ruling elite faction. The strongest challenge comes from the worker's movement. The worker's movement is composed of religious comunidades de base (basic communities), which are formed under the auspices of the Catholic Church, a politicized rural worker's union, and a political party called Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) or PT.

In this chapter the history of and conflict between the dominant class and the worker's movement will be discussed. The chapter will be divided into seven parts covering the national and regional context of political change, the traditional class system of Itá, the politics of the dominant social class, the role of the Catholic Church in the worker's movement, the origins of the workers' party,

the struggle for the rural union, and the political future of Itá.

National and Regional Politics After 1964

During the 1950s and early 1960s Brazil entered a crisis period of rapid economic change, shifting balances of political power, and growing class conflict. With industrial growth in the center-south (under the policy of ISI) there was a shift in power from agrarian classes to industrial classes. Since the 1930s there was also an ongoing centralization of power at the federal level which reduced regional power. These shifts in power created tense political conflicts. At the same time, the government's policy of promoting industrialization and the shift of power to industrial elites led to the subordination of agriculture to urban-industrial food needs, resulting in cheap food policies. Low prices hurt landowners and producers alike. Also in the countryside there was increased concentration of land ownership which led to the displacement of rural workers. Worker displacement resulted in growing incidences of resistance (including the formation of peasant leagues) and violence (Martins 1980). Rural worker displacement also fed rural-urban migration and growing unemployment and discontent in the cities. The climax of these tensions occurred in 1964 during the populist government of João Goulart. The military reacted to the growing social disorder (which was tolerated by Goulart) and workers'

threats to economic growth gained under ISI. On April 1, 1964, the military overthrew the government and established a centralized authoritarian regime (O'Donnell 1978:7).

During the following twenty years the military regime sought to continue and intensify the economic development initiated in the 1950s. To achieve this goal the military allied itself closely with international capital and openly encouraged foreign investment by providing strong fiscal incentives and infrastructure. To create a secure investment atmosphere, the military eliminated subversion and popular sector agitation (including opposition unions and the right to strike), maintained a cheap labor force by eroding wages, and canceled the capacity of the national bourgeois groups to oppose its economic policies (Ianni 1970:191; O'Donnell 1977). To increase internal markets for luxury commodities which Brazilian industry was producing (automobiles, appliances), the military also promoted income concentration in the middle and upper classes (O'Donnell 1977).

To enact its economic and social policies, the military constructed a bureaucratic-authoritarian state (BA state). The BA state is defined by the following characteristics according to O'Donnell:

(a) higher governmental positions usually are occupied by persons who come to them after successful careers in complex and highly bureaucratized organizations-- the armed forces, the public bureaucracy, and large private firms; (b) political exclusion, in that it aims at closing channels of political

access to the popular sector and its allies so as to deactivate them politically, not only by means of repression but also through the imposition of vertical (corporatist) controls by the state on such organizations as labor unions; (c) economic exclusion, in that it reduces or postpones indefinitely the aspiration to economic participation of the popular sector; (d) depoliticization, in the sense that it pretends to reduce social and political issues to "technical" problems to be resolved by means of interactions among the higher echelons of the above mentioned organizations; and (e) it corresponds to a stage of important transformations in the mechanisms of capital accumulation of its society, changes that are, in turn, a part of the "deepening" process of a peripheral and dependent capitalism characterized by extensive industrialization. (1978:6)

As the BA state expanded into the Amazon region in the mid 1960s, it altered the region's political status quo. Highly complex and centralized bureaucracies and political realignments were imposed to simultaneously satisfy the needs of the developing industrial base in the Brazilian south (particularly the generation of foreign revenues) and the changing needs of the state (maintaining legitimacy by allocating public resources to private groups) (Bunker 1985:79). Through this process the Amazon lost its regional autonomy and became an institutional, administrative, and political periphery of the Brazilian center (Bunker 1985:124). The new dominant groups which arose in the Amazon were completely dependent on the initiative and support of the powerful nation state and of large corporations investing in the region (Bunker 1985:82).

The Amazon's traditional dominant class's loss of economic and political power and increasing subordination to the BA state and to international capital occurred through several processes. Each of these processes was designed to replace the "traditional" political economy with a capitalistic one based on private ownership of land. First, the construction of new highways and the introduction of new economic activities such as timber extraction, mining, and cattle ranches, often under the control of international capital, broke old monopolies based on extraction and exchange and undermined the economic foundations of local political power in many areas. The old dominant class also suffered from a loss of control over land which affected political hegemony.

The federal government appropriated all unclaimed lands within 100 kilometers of existing or planned highways. This accounted for approximately 3,112,653 square kilometers or 63% of the legal Amazon region (Santos 1981, cited in Emmi 1985). A federal agency, INCRA, was set up to administer the land. In addition, with the penetration of the capitalist mode of production into the area, land title, not simple rights to land use, became important in controlling land. The lack of land title destroyed some dominant class members' claim to land.

The BA state also directly eroded the Amazonian political elite's power by the transfer of much of the local decision making process to the national center.

Particularly in areas with valuable extractive or agricultural resources (including much of southern Pará, Jarí, Manaus, and parts of Rondônia) local decision making was kept to a minimum. Many of these areas were designated National Security Areas and effectively occupied by the military. And finally, the BA state reserved the right to appoint state governors and to remove political rights (cassar) of opposition politicians. The governor of Pará during the 1964 coup, Aurêlio do Carmo, was one of the first victims to lose his political rights and be removed from office.

During the late 1960s and 1970s one political party dominated national and regional politics; the ARENA (Aliança Renovadora Nacional or National Renovation Alliance). In the Amazon the ARENA party defended the interests of the BA state and international capital and was allowed to establish political hegemony over the region. ARENA, however, did not function smoothly. By the 1970s the party in Pará split into two factions. One faction was led by Jarbas Passarinho (first governor after the coup and then senator of the Republic), while the second was led by Alacid Nunes (governor in 1966-70 and 1978-80). The split between the factions was not ideologically based as both factions had the military regime's confidence. The split merely represented two elite groups fighting for power (Araujo 1981, cited in Emmi 1985).

The Catholic Church as an Opposition Force

By the mid 1970s the only serious challenge to ARENA came from the Catholic Church. Historically, the Church had been closely aligned with the state and dominant classes in both the Amazon and the rest of Brazil. However, following the military coup of 1964 several events led the Church into active opposition to the military regime. This opposition first developed within a small progressive faction of Brazil's clergy. The progressive faction became highly critical of Brazil's authoritarian capitalism following years of growing poverty, exploitation, and repression of the working classes.

For many individuals within the progressive faction, or Catholic left wing, the root of the working class's sufferings was inherently exploitive political economic structures within capitalism, particularly class exploitation. Improvement of the working class's situation could come about only through reformist social transformation which would liberate the oppressed from class exploitation. According to some individuals within the progressive faction, the goal of reformist transformation was the replacement of authoritarian capitalism with nationalistic socialism (Follmann 1985:79). Ideally, this transformation was to proceed nonviolently through the organization and activism of the working classes.

During the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, the progressive faction integrated their viewpoint into a social Catholicism which

now is known as Liberation Theology. This progressive social Catholicism expands the Church's overseeing responsibilities from purely spiritual matters to include the material well-being of its followers. This change in the conceptualization of the Church's role in society is described by Bruneau:

elements in the church came to believe that society must be transformed before it could provide conditions in which people could feel fully human; at such time, and only then, would religious influence make sense... Since the urban middle class, traditionally favored by the church, was not suffering, this reinterpretation of influence had to include a change of preferred sectors, which would turn the church's attention to peasants and, to a lesser extent, the urban poor. (1982:50).

Pursuing social policy which favors the poor working classes is an inversion of the traditional role of the Church which has historically worked in defense of dominant class's interests and privileges in exchange for political power (Follmann 1985:67-68; Salem 1981:21-2). Abandoning this traditional role has been a difficult, and not totally successful endeavor. However, several events did occur in the 1960s and 1970s which have strengthened the progressive faction's influence over the Brazilian Church of today. First, in 1962 Vatican II linked the global Catholic Church's concerns and activities to the plight of the poor. This policy committed the Church officially, if not concretely, to oppose oppression throughout the world. A second event was the military coup in 1964. When the

military regime established its decision making apparatus, it completely excluded the Church from any decision making role (Salem 1981:35). For the first time in Brazilian history the Church had no input into state policy. Adding insult to this situation, the state legalized divorce in 1977 which infuriated even the most conservative clergy (Bruneau 1982:74).

The final series of events that helped tip the Church in favor of the progressive view involved the military's increasing use of repression and violence against the working class and other opposition forces. This repression included imprisonment for Catholic priests and bishops. Government harassment of the Church, plus growing knowledge of human rights violations, including torture, quieted the conservative clergy's support for the state and allowed the progressive faction to take command of the Church through organizations such as the National Council of Brazilian Bishops or CNBB (Comissão Nacional de Bispos do Brasil).

The Church in Pará followed the lead of the national Church during the 1960s. By the 1970s there were a number of local events which further radicalized the progressive clergy. Among these were a series of violent acts to expel occupants from land being turned into cattle ranches near Conceição do Araguaia in the south of Pará. Measures used to expel occupants included beatings, shootings, poisoning of streams, and burning of fields and houses. There were some 200 murders, most unrecorded, between 1969 and 1981

(Foweraker 1981:20). In addition, there was a small guerilla movement in southeastern Pará (São Geraldo, Xambioá, Perdidos, and Boa Vista). Approximately seventy armed individuals operated for three years until they were hunted down by a massive military force in 1974. This military action was followed by a generalized repression against the local population. For some time there were between 10,000 and 20,000 military troops occupying the area (Martins 1980:144).

In 1981 another violent event occurred which directly involved the Pará Church. In São Geraldo de Araguaia there was extensive conflict between cattle companies, supported by the local judge, police, and hired guns (jagunços), and workers occupying land. Between 1979 and 1981 forty-five workers were assassinated and 916 attempts were made to expel workers from land (Movimento para Libertar Os Padres da Amazônia 1981 or Movement to Free the Priests of the Amazon). In August of 1981 two Military Police accompanying land surveyors were murdered by thirteen rural workers who feared the land surveying marked the onset of a land invasion. The assassinations sparked massive military retaliation. Hundreds of workers were arrested. Among those imprisoned were two French priests working in the area. They were charged with inciting the assassinations through their teachings.

Following the arrests, two bishops in Pará attempted to intervene in the dispute and were in turn interrogated in

Belém with the intention of implicating the Church in the conflict and condemning it for subversive activity (Foweraker 1981:24). Following the event the progressive faction of the Church was denounced as communist and many priests throughout the state received threats from right wing hate groups such as the Communist Hunt Command (Comando de Caça aos Comunistas) and the Committee in Support of Democracy (Comite de Apôio à Democracia).

In 1983 another event occurred which added to the tensions between Church and State. The event had particular significance for Itá since it involved their Bishop. The incident began when sugar cane cutters working for the Abraham Lincoln mill on the Transamazon Highway were not paid for seven months. To force the company to pay, the workers decided to blockade the Transamazon highway. The Bishop of the Xingu attended the blockade. After several days the military police broke up the blockade. The police beat the Bishop in full view of the workers (there were photographs taken detailing the incident). He was then imprisoned for several days.

On a national level, the Church remained the major outspoken opponent of the military regime into the 1980s. The Church served as a protective umbrella under which the opposition could organize without excessive government repression. During Mass and during meetings held in churches, a forum for the discussion of politics and resistance to the military regime was created. In addition,

the Church actively encouraged worker participation in resistance to the military. This was accomplished by political conscious-raising (conscientização), often through the teaching of Liberation Theology, which helped develop a class consciousness. The Church also aided resistance through special intermediary organizations. Among these organizations which are still active in the Amazon today are the Indian Missionary Council or CIMI (Comissão Indígena Missionário), designed to organize and protect indigenous people, and the Pastoral Land Commission or CPT (Comissão Pastoral da Terra), designed to inform workers of their rights to land.

The Church also promoted worker participation in resistance through the formation of Ecclesiastical Base Communities or CEBs (Comunidades Eclesiais de Base). CEBs are small grass-roots lay religious groups. They are organized in a number of forms ranging from groups specializing in visitation, reflection, prayer, to mother's clubs, youth clubs, and neighborhood clubs. Catholic theologian Clodovis Boff (1978:51) defines CEBs as small groups where primary relations are developed within a religious context. CEBs are base communities in the sense that they congregate the poor working class (the base of society). The CEBs are also base communities in the sense that they construct a grass-roots Christianity which is relevant to the context of the local environment, rather than being imposed upon the masses from the elite Church

hierarchy. In many of the CEBs, but not all, this grass-roots Christianity (Liberation Theology) is critical of contemporary Brazilian society and seeks to demystify exploitation. As Leonardo Boff (brother of Clodovis Boff) wrote, in many CEBs...

one learns there to live with the truth. It is impossible to continue hiding the true social reality. There one calls things by their names. Exploitation is exploitation. Torture is torture. Dictatorship is dictatorship. (1981:201)

In these progressive CEBs the answers for material as well as spiritual needs are sought. Members of the CEBs deal with all the problems the poor suffer: unemployment, low salaries, bad working conditions, lack of basic services, access to land (Boff 1981:201). The CEBs develop various methods to fulfill some material needs, such as mutual aid, *mutirão* (labor exchanges), collective consumption, health posts, information exchange, communal gardens, cooperatives, and basic education (Follmann 1985:89). The CEBs also promote activism in the form of petitioning the government for basic services (water, electricity, health care) or resisting expulsion from land. At the same time the CEBs direct their members to other groups, including unions and political parties, which participate in promoting worker's rights.

In response to this ideology of resistance and worker activism (which has resulted in many minor successes), the CEBs and various members of the clergy have been repressed

by the military regime. Priests have been imprisoned as subversives and Liberation Theology is labeled as communist propaganda by the state and dominant social classes. Even within the Church there is a reactionary movement against the CEBs called "Tradition-Family-Property" (Follmann 1985:76). This movement, part of the Catholic right wing, believes that Marxists have penetrated the Church and are trying to destroy it from the inside (Follmann 1985:98).

Despite criticism and repression, the number of CEBs throughout Brazil have grown to a number between 5000 and 100,000 plus by the 1980s (Follmann 1985:86). A more exact estimation of CEB numbers is impossible to obtain due to a void of available data and to a problem with defining what constitutes a CEB. The higher estimation includes CEBs which are not politically active and do not teach class consciousness. The lower estimate does not include CEBs which focus exclusively on spiritual activities.

The Political Abertura (Opening)

By the late 1970s and early 1980s the military regime initiated a gradual lifting of some aspects of its authoritarian rule en route to a transfer of power to a civilian government by 1985. This political "abertura" (opening) was a response to growing dissatisfaction within the dominant class with the exclusionary political and economic policies of the regime, widespread corruption, the worsening economic status of Brazil, and persistent popular

resistance. The military regime began reducing censorship of the media and allowed the formation of opposition political parties for local municipal and city elections in 1982. By 1985 the military allowed the senate to elect the first civilian President in twenty years, Tancredo Neves. Despite the election of a civilian government, the BA state still remained intact.

In Pará, as in the rest of Brazil, the "abertura" led to a proliferation of political parties. The ARENA party was dissolved and replaced by the Social Democratic Party or PDS (Partido Democrático Social). Initially, both the Jarbas and Alacid factions were in PDS. However, the old feud between the factions led Alacid and thirteen state senators to leave PDS. First they joined the Brazilian Worker's Party, PTB (Partido Trabalhador do Brasil), and then later joined the major opposition party to the military regime, the Democratic Movement Party of Brazil, PMDB (Partido do Movimento Democrático do Brasil). This split cost Jarbas the elections for governor in 1982 which was won by Jarder Barbalho of PMDB.

Following these elections, control of Pará was divided between PMDB and PDS. Between 1982 and 1985 there was a growing number of political conversions from PDS to PMDB throughout the Amazon. This was part of a national trend which eventually led to the election of opposition candidate, Tancredo Neves of PMDB, for president of Brazil. PDS was further eroded by the creation of the Liberal Front,

FL (Frente Liberal), which consisted of party members unwilling to vote for the 1985 PDS presidential candidate. FL received a major boost with the ascendance of vice-president José Sarney, who was FL, to the presidency after the death of Tancredo Neves in March of 1985.

During the "abertura" of the 1980s the popular sectors influenced by the Catholic Church, CEBs, and Liberation Theology also became active in political parties. Some joined the major opposition party, PMDB, or various other minor parties, while many joined the Workers' Party, PT (Partido dos Trabalhadores). This party was founded among industrial workers in São Paulo. Its leadership maintained close ties to both urban labor unions and to the progressive sector of the Catholic Church. Because of these ties with the clergy, the PT was labeled as the Church's party. In the 1982 elections, PT had success in São Paulo. In Pará, PT had minor success in the election of several municipal council members throughout the state.

Politics and Social Class in Itá

The broad political changes that swept Brazil between 1964 and 1986 have had major impacts on Itaense politics. These changes began soon after the military coup of 1964. With the rise of the military regime to national power, one particular political faction in Itá was able to seize and maintain near absolute political control. This control lasted until the "abertura" increased access to the state's

political apparatus by opposition factions. By the 1982 elections significant political inroads were made by PMDB and PT. In particular, PT, which is aligned with the local worker's movement and CEBs, began to reorder political allegiances. This change now threatens to upset the very core of the traditional political economic system which dates back to the rubber boom.

The traditional political system is controlled by the small local dominant class. This class accounts for approximately 5% of the municipality's population. The dominant class consists of two divisions, which are rarely mutually exclusive. The first is composed of merchants and large landowners. The major source of power for this division, as discussed in the preceding chapter, is the control of exchange and, to a lesser extent, control of land. The merchant and large landowning members organize, control, and expropriate wealth from their workers through the institutions of credit-debt lending and patron-client relationships. The second division consists of a few professionals residing in town (judges, lawyers, doctors) and civil servants, who are always relatives or friends of the merchant and landowning families. The professional and civil servants control access to government jobs, government services, and government revenue, as well as having considerable influence within the local legal system. In most instances, the merchant/large landowning division and profession/civil servant division of the dominant class pool

their resources to further the interests of the class and to maintain the political status quo.

Subserviant to the political apparatus of the dominant class is a large and diverse working class which accounts for approximately 95% of the municipality's population. The working class is composed of people who engage in some type of manual labor as their principal form of livelihood. Nearly all workers operate under a patrão (trading post owner, landowner, or wage employer) who controls exchange or access to the means of production. As discussed previously (Chapter Three), the working class consists of four divisions and one subdivision. People in Itá do not necessarily distinguish these groups, however. The first division is composed of the poor town dwellers who are part-time employed or underemployed in wage labor, and/or seasonally employed in extraction and/or farming. Wage labor jobs held by these urban poor include lumber production in sawmills, semi-skilled artisanry jobs like carpentry and masonry, unskilled municipal jobs such as street cleaners, weeders, and garbage collectors, and other service sector jobs such as maids, cooks, nannies, and laundresses.

The second division of the working class consists of landless freguesas. These people farm or extract for a landlord/trading post. The third division includes the autonomous terra firme farmers on unowned land. These independent farmers still maintain close ties to a trading

post and often migrate seasonally to extract for that trading post merchant. The fourth division consists of the small landowners. These small landowners engage in extraction and farming. And finally, the one subdivision which cross-cuts the other divisions is that of the brokers. The brokers inhabit both the rural and urban areas. The brokers engage in extraction, farming, and wage labor under a dominant class patrão, but also function as modest small-scale merchants, money lenders, and as intermediaries between their fellow workers and patrões over matters of produce exchange and land access.

None of the four divisions of the working class are mutually-exclusive. Individuals often change membership in them several times during a lifetime. This occurs most frequently between the urban poor, landless freguesa, and terra firme farming divisions. Despite this fluidity, the working class is still somewhat differentiate and segmented in terms of political behavior. In general, the urban poor and landless freguesas tend to submit more readily to the economic and political demands of their patrões. Their conservative behavior is due to their relatively powerless position vis-a-vis their patrões who control access to the means of production and the means of exchange. Less submissive, but not totally independent in action, are the independent terra firme farmers on unowned land. These people have freedom of access to the means of production, but are dependent on patrões for exchange. Politically,

these farmer's actions range widely from conservative to radical depending on individual circumstances.

The small landowner division, by contrast, is the most independent in action. They control the means of production, often on the economically more valuable várzea. There is some pressure on this group to submit to the wishes of the trading post patrão who controls exchange. But the small landowners are in a better position to resist these conservative influences, especially since the timber boom and rubber resurgence have increased their wealth. At the same time, there is the potential for highly successful small landowners to increase landholdings, recruit freguesas to work for them, and establish trading posts. Through this mobility, a few small landowners enter the merchant/landowner division of the dominant class (defined as those people controlling production or exchange of their workers). This limited potential for mobility, superimposed upon the relative freedom of political action, divides the small landowners into a small conservative faction aligned with the dominant class and a larger radical faction pursuing their own interests.

Freedom of economic and political action is an important element in political change among the working class. As will be seen below, the direction and intensity of change depends on the ability to resist the dominant class, and then to unite working class interests to have effective political impact. A key to this process is the leadership of the

broker subdivision. The brokers, who are farmers, extractors, or urban wage laborers, are instrumental in persuading their followers to participate or not to participate in resistance movements.

The dominant social class in Itá in 1986 includes no more than thirty to forty families. These families are set apart from other classes by their control over the means of production and exchange. In terms of wealth, education, appearance, or customs, however, the distinction between the dominant class and the worker class is hard to discern, especially for outsiders visiting the community. This is the result of years of economic depression and impoverishment of elites as discussed in Chapter Three. In the 1980s people no longer make any reference to "gente de primeira" or upper class in Itá. In fact, many people insist that there is no class system left. In this "folk" view everyone is considered equal, although there are individuals who fare somewhat better in material wealth and prestige than others. Other Itaenses remain cognizant of class relationships but demote the dominant class to the classification of gente de segunda (people of the second class) along with the working class. The "superiority" of the dominant class is still recognized by the labels gente de primeiro seleção (people of the first selection), gente formado (educated or mannered people), or simply comerciantes (merchants) while the working class is called gente de segundo seleção (people of the second selection)

or lavradores (specifically, manual laborers in agriculture, but in Itá the meaning has been expanded to include all workers).

Despite the blurred distinction between classes by both local residents and outside visitors, observation of behavior reveals careful maintenance of class boundaries between most groups (class boundaries between some small landowners and merchants/large landowners are less well maintained). Common examples are found in addressing a superior with Seu, Senhor (mister or sir), Dona, and Senhora (mistress). It is also a common practice for individuals of low status to avoid direct eye contact with "superiors", to sit on the floor and offer chairs (which are always scarce) to "superiors", and to experience vergonha (shame) in the presence of "superiors".

Social distance is also maintained in indoor and outdoor public festivals where prominent individuals pay relatively high fees (over US \$2) to rent tables and chairs. The poor have to stand. In addition, class distinctions are maintained by dance hall patronization. Several dance halls have gained reputations for catering to higher status individuals or to lower status individuals. For example, people comment about the smugness of the one elite dance hall and the high entrance fee charged to separate the poor from the "rich". Other people comment about the rowdiness of the various poor dance halls where every dance is sure to bring on a fight.

Another example of maintenance of class distinctions involves skyrocket displays during religious processions. Skyrockets are traditional methods of paying homage to the saints. They are typically fired from river boats passing the church of Itá to pay a promesa (promise) to Saint Benedict for a safe journey. In addition, they are used during processions to pay promesas and honor the saint. Given the importance and visibility of the skyrockets, a few prominent families decided to improve the status of the Saint Anthony procession (the saint of the town elite) vis-a-vis the Saint Benedict procession (the saint of the poor) by buying and setting off several hundred skyrockets. The expensive firework's display, which consisted of nearly fifteen minutes of solid rapid-fire explosions, surpassed the corresponding display for Saint Benedict. Symbolically, this event demonstrated Saint Anthony's superiority, and by extension, the elite's superiority in Itá.

The Politics of the Dominant Social Class

Of the approximately thirty to forty families which make up the dominant class in Itá, only ten are active politically (campaigning for political parties and running for office). These families form an inner circle of power within the municipality. The inner circle, however, does not always function harmoniously. There are frequent squabbles and even open hostilities among factions. The conflicts among the inner circle are usually either personal

and family disputes, or disputes over access to resources. Rarely are there major ideological differences.

The extent to which dominant class's squabbles were manifested varied throughout the 1964-1986 period. In general, disputes have been more open before the military revolution and after the abertura. In the eighteen year period in between, opposition was contained and largely silenced. In fact, the rise of the national military regime enabled one particular faction in Itá to seize and maintain political control. One man, Alberto Viana, headed this faction. Alberto used his connections to the regional, and by extension, national regime to become the virtual coronel (town boss) of Itá.

Alberto Viana is from one of Itá's "fallen" aristocratic families. His mother, Dona Branquinha, was the prim and proper school teacher and the church beata (overseer) described by Wagley (1976:106-109, 121-2, 157, 167-8). Since the 1940s the Viana family maintained their position in the dominant class through landholdings in the interior and a trading post in town. Alberto's father also ran the telegraph station in town. Alberto first entered politics while still young. He was active within the newly formed ARENA party immediately following the military's seizing of power. Using his political connections, and his willingness to align himself with national and international capital entering the area, Alberto was appointed prefeito (mayor) of Itá in 1966. Once in power, he was able to

consolidate power by ingeniously using personal persuasion and the repressive powers given him by the new government. By the end of his first term as mayor he had co-opted or silenced his opposition.

Alberto's methods to maintain political hegemony were varied. For example, he used a number of positive enticements to gain allies. He procured funding for projects favored by elite families such as the timber extracting road into the interior. He kept a supply of cash on hand to buy support or quiet dissent. He also controlled access to most government jobs which were strategically handed out to supporters. Alberto was careful to fill most of the government positions with individuals who were easily manipulated. In this way he was assured of minimal competition or resistance from within his administration.

At the same time Alberto had a number of methods for retaliating against those who opposed him. For example, people openly talked of how he manipulated local tax laws and seized opponents' land or store merchandise for back taxes. In several cases involving his chief rivals, he ensured that taxes were delinquent by arranging for the local tax collector to refuse to accept payment. The only recourse for his rivals was to travel to Belém to pay back taxes. Other methods of retaliation against opponents included using the local police to intimidate them. He also had access to the federal police which he used to ensnare

the troublesome local priest on several occasions (see below).

After Alberto's first term as mayor, his acquired political power allowed him to control Itá's ruling party and to hand pick his successor in 1971. Alberto remained in the government, strategically positioned as the municipal secretary. From this office he was able to control the mayor's actions. During the following administration, 1973-1976, internal dissension and the split in the regional ARENA party turned Alberto against the mayor he had initially supported (see Miller 1976:321-2). But by 1976 Alberto regained political control and was elected mayor again. One of his first actions was to discontinue all the projects of the previous administration, a common practice in Brazilian politics. Of particular note was the discontinuation of the street paving project after only two streets were completed. The cement purchased for the additional two streets and various cross streets was left unused and hardened in the humidity of the rainy season.

By Alberto's second term as mayor, his reputation for total command of the local political system had become legend. Rumors about his corruption were also widely discussed around town. For example, there were state and federal grant appropriations released to Itá for construction of a new municipal dock, a sewer system, street paving, a school in the interior, and a small sports center. Little or nothing was done to complete these projects, yet

the money disappeared. Another scandal involved the regular delaying of government pay to municipal employees. Many municipal employees reported that Alberto withheld this money for up to three months at a time while investing the money in Belém for a nice profit. When the delinquent pay was finally issued, it was usually less than the amount owed. In one extreme case, Alberto managed to avoid paying the vice-major's salary for six years. Alberto took these wage skimming rights so seriously that he swore to numerous people that he would leave Itá if ever a bank were established in the municipality to directly distribute wages. Alberto was also rumored to have used municipal funds and workers to clear land and plant pasture on his property. In addition, allegations were made that he appropriated much of the municipality's machinery and spare parts for his own use.

Alberto also took a special interest in interacting with timber, palm-heart, and Petrobrás firms. He encouraged them to operate in Itá and then provided them with numerous favors. This policy was well received by Alberto's political and technocratic superiors who were responsible for carrying out the military government's development plans for the region. From example, in Itá it is common knowledge among the people that Alberto persistently pressured the local notary public to speed up land purchases and property titles for Brumasa. In addition, there were several cases of individuals resisting

the companies' land acquisitions and timber extraction activities who received messages from Alberto pressuring them to give in to the company. In return for such favors, Alberto was allowed to become a principal business intermediary for the companies. In the case of Petrobrás, Alberto became a local labor recruiter. He used this position for political purposes, reminding recruits that their job was given as a favor to be repaid by political support during election times.

Through Alberto's access to government funds and his dealings with various extraction companies he was able to amass a sizable amount of capital. Outward signs of his prosperity in Itá were found in his extensive landholdings, sawmill, bakery (the largest in town), truck, and expensive house. In Belém he maintained a second expensive house, cars for his children, and for awhile owned a small fleet of taxis. He educated his children and, through the help of Jarbas Passarinho, obtained a prestigious government job in the nation's capital of Brasília for one son.

Alberto did his best to keep Itá subservient to his control. He understood that as long as Itá remained isolated and underdeveloped (except for extraction activities) he could prolong his political hegemony. Toward this end Alberto prevented the establishment of banks, diesel stations, better port facilities, and even discouraged the construction of a connecting road to the Transamazon highway.

Alberto's undisputed control of Itá continued into the early 1980s. At this point, however, the demilitarization of the national government led to a decrease in local censorship, political restrictions, and repression. Without these types of extra-local support, Alberto's ability to govern declined. Alberto had to resort to creative political shenanigans to preserve power. In one case he accomplished this by manipulating the formation of one of the two opposition parties that arose during the political abertura. He did this by encouraging one of his political underlings to found the PMDB in Itá. Alberto was even rumored to have helped fill out the complicated forms required for party formation. With his man leading the opposition party, Alberto was assured of a weak opposition.

Alberto also alertly persuaded Cecília Porto Alberquerque, a locally popular daughter of the former mayor, Jorge Porto, to run for mayor in his new party, the PDS. Using her family's good name, her popularity, and Alberto's backing, she overcame strong gender prejudice and a field of eight candidates in three parties to win the 1982 mayorial elections (the candidate from PT actually got the most votes, but a law allowing the leading candidates to pick up votes from defeated candidates in their own parties gave her the needed cumulative total for victory).

Despite Alberto's success in the 1982 elections, part of his power base had been permanently lost due to the abertura. For example, the mechanisms of containing

opposition such as excessive police harassment, tax manipulation, and judicial non-interference were greatly restricted. Alberto's loss of repressive powers enabled many silenced enemies to retaliate for the first time in eighteen years. Immediately following the elections the opposition members of the new town council made a motion for a state inquiry to audit past government expenditure abuses. Alberto was able to use his political connections in Belém and Itá to stop the inquiry, but the mere fact that such a motion was openly made indicated that Alberto's political hegemony was eroding. Alberto was also weakened because the state government was controlled by PMDB and Alberto remained in PDS. As a result, the PDS administration received few state funds and favors from the opposition governor.

A third major blow to Alberto's political power was a schism that developed between him and his hand-picked successor, Cecília. Cecília had been educated in Belém, earning an advanced degree in education. Before being elected mayor she worked in the FUNRURAL office, administering the retired worker's pensions. Since Cecília had no political background and was from a family that was closely aligned with Alberto, Alberto hoped to manipulate Cecília and essentially run the prefeitura as he had in earlier years. In fact, toward this end, after Cecília's inauguration Alberto was still directing government business and asking municipal workers to report to him before seeing Cecília. Alberto even persuaded Cecília to pay off the

debts he had accumulated while in office (the same debts which were under threat of investigation for embezzlement).

By 1983 Cecília and her husband grew tired of Alberto's interference. Cecília's husband and Alberto got into a heated argument and death threats were exchanged. From that point on Cecília's administration distanced itself from Alberto. Alberto, in retaliation, used his political influence to create problems for Cecília. One example involved the 1985 election for President of the municipal council. The council was composed of four members from PDS, two from PT, and one from PMDB. Cecília's party, PDS, had the majority and would have won if not for Alberto's heavy handed pressuring of one vereadora (council member) from PDS to vote for the opposition candidate. The vereadora from PMDB won, with the aid of PT. This caused considerable embarrassment for Cecília and for PDS.

The combined affects of the demilitarization of government and the abertura, the end of local repression, the ascension of the opposition party regionally, and personal schisms within PDS were important in breaking Alberto's political hold on Itá. If there had been no other mitigating events, the political system would likely have returned to one controlled by a number of competing factions within the dominant social class. However, the rise of the worker's movement created changes that significantly altered the traditional political and economic power structures of Itá.

The Politics of the Working Class: Church and CEBs
in Itá

Itá's deteriorating economy in the 1950s and 60s, the weakened position of the dominant social class, the increased threat to worker subsistence from resource depletion, the rising feelings of relative deprivation and frustration, and the abertura set the stage for the rise of the worker's movement. The final ingredient needed for the movement to develop was an organized, structured ideology of resistance. This ideology was introduced through the teachings of Itá's Catholic priest, Padre Chico (the nickname for Francisco). Since the late 1970s Padre Chico has preached the evolving tenets of progressive social Catholicism. He is highly critical of unjust national and local political economic structures. He takes an active stand against oppression and class exploitation and has started a drive to organize workers to fend for themselves. These activities have led him into open confrontation with Itá's dominant class.

Padre Chico is an Italian-born permanent resident of Brazil. He came to reside permanently in Itá in 1972. In the following fourteen years Padre Chico worked steadily to raise the politico-religious consciousness of his parishioners. He uses a variety of settings to spread his theology, including masses, CEB services and meetings, religious festivals, and numerous encounters sponsored by the Church (Catechism Week, Catechists Triduum, Worker's

Week, Assembly of the People of God, Women's Week, Bible Studies, and visits of the Bishop, Padres, Nuns, and lay members of the Church). Padre Chico is particularly active in the vast rural interior. He often spends three weeks out of each month traveling and meeting with the people in the interior. Padre Chico also cultivates politico-religious consciousness by sending people to a variety of Church sponsored seminars in Altamira, Santarém, and Belém. The subject of the seminars ranges from land rights to community leadership. During these trips people also come into contact with members of national and regional worker's movements which serves to further strengthen their understanding and commitment to the opposition movement.

Padre Chico uses a variety of ways to raise worker's political consciousness. One of the most common is to apply passages in the Bible to contemporary life in Itá. Passages relating to resistance and liberation from oppression (the Hebrews under Egyptian rule, the Jews and Christians under Roman rule) and to strength in unity are frequently used to illustrate contemporary class exploitation and the power of worker unity. Jesus Christ is conceived as a revolutionary living in an unjust world and wanting change. Christ lived with and supported the poor and marginalized, and condemned all those who oppressed and alienated them. Knowing the word of Christ, therefore, is seen to be the beginning of a material, as well as spiritual, revolution.

In sermons and various discussions, Padre Chico openly criticizes local inequalities. For example, the Padre points out the unfair exchange rates patrões charge their freguesas, which is a fraction of the market value of the product. He encourages workers to form independent cooperatives to bypass trading posts for the sale of produce and purchase of basic necessities. He expounds on land right abuses of the dominant class. He brings in experts from Belém to explain occupants' rights to land. He implores workers threatened with expulsion to demand their rights to the land or at least indemnification. He often repeats, "land belongs to those who make it produce." He attacks political corruption and suppression of human rights. He asks workers to organize and make politicians' account for their actions. He also urges workers to vote in rural union elections. He speaks of the rural union as an important tool to resist the dominant class's economic hegemony.

Padre Chico's words and activism have led him into direct confrontation with the local dominant class. Increasingly church attendance and participation by the dominant class and its associates have declined. Dominant class participation in and financial offerings for religious festivals have also declined. There have been growing protests that the Padre wishes to divide the community between the haves and have nots. The Padre has been accused of preaching communism and of plotting to destroy the

wealthier members of Itá. He is blamed for inciting workers to take land and resources (açaí, timber) from the "rich." A few outspoken individuals flatly blame the Padre for all of Itá's land problems. The Padre has even been attacked and labeled a communist in a article from a regional right wing newsletter.

By the late 1970s relations between the Church and Itá's dominant class were severely deteriorating. An open feud developed between Padre Chico and Alberto the mayor. Alberto began ridiculing the Padre and calling him a communist on his loud-speaker system which broadcast to the town from his house. On two occasions Alberto called in the federal police to arrest Padre Chico. Alberto charged the Padre with breaking national security laws, interfering in politics (which was outlawed for foreigners), and inciting class conflict. The Padre responded to the accusations and brought in the Bishop of the Xingu to support him. None of the charges stood up and the Padre was allowed to continue preaching. But the embitterment grew. The latest round of confrontation occurred in 1986 during rural union elections. As will be discussed below, widescale fraud in the union by representatives of the dominant class led to the workers' occupation of the union building. The Padre was blamed for inciting the occupation. He received death threats from local thugs and was briefly imprisoned by the police. Also during the turmoil, the Padre's boat was stolen and sunk.

Despite the antagonism with the dominant class (or maybe because of it), the Padre's popularity has grown among the rural working class. Initially, the Padre was welcome by all rural and many urban workers who were grateful for the religious services and personalized attention given in their own homes. Building upon this positive response, the Padre encouraged the workers to form CEBs, or comunidades as they are called in Itá. Through the Padre's continuous efforts, sixty-six comunidades have been organized by the 1980s. Many of the comunidades in the interior are built upon the old religious irmandades (brotherhoods) that have existed for decades (see Galvão 1955:48-58 ff.; Wagley 1976:188-190). The Padre has expanded the irmandades' membership and functions. The irmandades maintain their patron saint and their community festival in the name of the saint. The Padre does insist, however, that dancing and drinking be completely separated spatially and temporally from the religious ceremonies. The comunidades are also encouraged to construct chapels and to hold weekly religious services (culto) on their own. Women, men, and older children participate.

Throughout the formation of the comunidades, the Padre has endeavored to spread progressive social Catholicism. In general, social Catholicism is welcomed by the working class. Its message appeals to workers and helps explain their suffering from increasing threats to their livelihoods which have been aggravated by recent development trends.

However, the Padre's success in stimulating political economic action among the working class hinges on several factors. One involves the particular productive-exchange relationships workers have with their patrões. For example, the small landowners and autonomous terra firme farming divisions of the working class have the most freedom to incorporate and act on the political messages of progressive social Catholicism. By contrast, the urban poor and landless freguesa divisions are less capable of political involvement, lest they suffer retaliation by their patrões. Not surprisingly, the Padre's success, and also a large portion of his time, is spent among small landowners and terra firme farmers on unowned land.

A second factor in raising the political consciousness of the working class is the ability to recruit brokers into the CEB movement. In many hamlets and neighborhoods the success of the comunidade is assured if the brokers/leaders agree to participate. Depending on the personal skill and following of brokers, they can motivate a large part of the group to actively support the comunidade. Conversely, weak, undecided, or anti-comunidade brokers can destroy support for the comunidade's efforts. As a result of their importance, brokers are frequently recruited as comunidade catechists. The catechists are usually the spiritual, as well as political leaders of the comunidade. By the 1980s they number between 400 and 500 in the municipality. The Padre gives special attention to their education, inviting

them to numerous Church meeting in town and even sending them to other cities for meetings. Through this training they are educated to present the tenets of progressive social Catholicism. They are also instructed in land rights through contacts with CPT (Pastoral Land Commission) and CUT (Central Unico de Trabalhadores, a national umbrella organization for labor unions).

Within the comunidades an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual aid is pursued. The comunidades encourage an expanded use of the traditional labor exchanges (convite, troca dias, puxirão) which have come to be generally known as mutirão. Mutirão is used for agriculture, house building, and for various community projects (building chapels, maintaining a clear waterway or road, planting a communal garden, or extracting timber). Mutual aid groups are set up to run small health posts to provide minimal access to medicine. Small cantinas (canteens) are established to bypass local trading posts and provide cheaper goods. Some comunidades manage to form cooperatives to sell rubber and timber or lumber in bulk quantity directly to extraction companies, again bypassing trading posts. Mutual aid is particularly important to the comunidades when individuals confront landowners over land use and ownership problems. Through strength in numbers, members of the comunidades are able to resist abuses by patrões (see below).

Each of the sixty-six comunidades is organized for maximum lay input. During services, and especially at meetings, individuals are allowed to offer personal interpretations of religious messages as well as discuss material problems of daily life. Due to the high degree of lay control, the comunidades demonstrate a wide range of behavior. They range from politically active and internally cohesive to politically inactive and internally fragmented. Their behavior depends on several criteria. Among these are the strength of local brokers/leaders (mentioned above), the degree of autonomy of workers (mentioned above), and external pressure brought to bear on the community. In the case of external pressures, comunidades exposed to threats of land invasion by timber companies or palm-heart companies, threats of resource depletion by excessive extractive activities or overhunting, or threats of excessive patrão repression, including expulsion of freguesas, tend to be either radicalized by the threat or dissolved by it.

Although the comunidades are designed to be accessible to all members of the local community, there are some problems with personality conflicts, ideological conflicts, and even power abuses which result in exclusion from the groups. This problem is recognized by the Church as causing a "fechado" or "closed" comunidade. Most frequently this problem fragments comunidades along class or division lines. Large landowners, merchants, and professionals react to the

progressive view of Catholicism and choose not to attend. They view Liberation Theology, and especially worker organization, as a threat to their privileged position. Usually these people also persuade others not to attend. People most often manipulated in this way are the urban poor, the landless freguesas, and sometimes the terra firme farmers. The majority of "closed" comunidades exist in town. The dominant class is strongest in town and better able to pressure people not to join.

Cases of exclusion from comunidades are more rare. In most of these cases a few over-zealous progressive members decide that comunidade members are not participating sufficiently in group activities, or have not developed proper attitudes (particularly class consciousness). The over-zealous members pressure the non-conforming members to change. Conflict increases to the point where the non-conforming members abandon the comunidade.

Exclusion from the comunidade carries certain penalties which strengthen the ability of leaders to impose conformity. The comunidade decides who can baptize their children and who can marry in the Church. In most comunidades there are prerequisites for these services, usually consisting of attendances at meetings and participation in comunidade activities. Some people complain that the Church uses the threat of refusal to baptize or marry to force people into participating in the comunidade and accepting the progressive view of

Catholicism. In retaliation, people with sufficient money travel to a neighboring town controlled by conservative Padres from Spain who required no prerequisites for baptism and marriage.

As suggested above, the range of behavior exhibited by comunidades in Itá varies greatly. To better demonstrate this diversity, particularly in terms of organization, economic behavior, and political behavior, four cases of comunidades are presented below. These four cases do not exhaust the diversity exhibited in Itá. However, they do sample the range of behavior. They also demonstrate the conflictual existence of worker's organizations in relation to the dominant class and the degree of external pressure brought to bear on them.

Camutá

The comunidade of Camutá is located in a small hamlet on the Pucuruí River. Camutá is a terra firme farming settlement of twenty-four families. It is located on unowned state land (terra devoluta) far into the interior. The comunidade's official name is Nossa Senhora de Fátima (Our Lady of Fatima), however, people usually refer to it simply as Camutá. Camutá is probably the strongest, most cohesive comunidade in the municipality. It was founded by a group of families wishing to create an agricultural colony. The families were all tied by real and fictive kinship (compadrazco). Before the Padre arrived they were

an active, united community led by a broker named Francisco Teixeira. They had undertaken several joint projects including building and maintaining a dirt street through the center of their hamlet and building a small port on the Pucuruí river. After Padre Chico arrived and began preaching about spiritual and material liberation, worker unity, and the formation of CEBs, the people of Camutá were further motivated to organize and pursue their goal of an agricultural colony. They formed a unique comunidade based on communal ownership of land and communal work. Camutá became the only comunidade in Itá employing these extensive communal arrangements.

By the mid 1970s Camutá's worker's commune was fully functional. The commune was structured in such a way that members worked on projects for the comunidade several days a week according to their time constraints or personal preference. These projects included maintaining a communal garden (private gardens were maintained also), extracting timber, sawing lumber, running a small cantina stocking food and medicine, and routine custodial work in the hamlet (particularly weeding paths and clearing waterways). Records of days given to comunidade service were kept (this practice was also unique to Camutá). Profits and surplus produce made from the garden, timber, and lumber sales were then divided among comunidade members according to their labor input.

On Mondays and Thursdays, however, the people of Camutá gave their labor to the comunidade for free. Profits made from the various projects performed on Mondays and Thursdays were used for a general comunidade fund to sponsor festivals, purchase tools and spare parts, finance the cantina, help pay for emergency health needs, and any other necessities that arose. People in the hamlet were free to join and quit the comunidade's commune. In fact, two families at Camutá never joined while eight other families migrated in, joined, quit, and then moved away. When leaving the commune, members were permitted to receive compensation for their labor. While compensation was always given, this did put severe financial strains on the group which remained.

Francisco Teixeira is the charismatic leader and catechist of the comunidade. Francisco is a manioc farmer and timber extractor. He is also a broker who had formerly run a small trading post in Camutá until being politicized about worker exploitation. He promptly discontinued his business. Francisco is very active in the comunidade, working diligently on communal projects. He is also a superb motivator. In addition to Francisco, the comunidade has several other articulate catechists who are well versed in Liberation Theology. Through the leadership of Francisco and the theological guidance of the catechists, Camutá has jelled into a particularly cohesive and politically active comunidade.

Camutá's cohesiveness has been an important asset to the survival and prosperity of the comunidade. Through joint effort in the 1970s the people of Camutá cut a logging road into the interior and began extracting timber in order to finance their agricultural colony. Since they lacked a truck, they hauled logs out on a hand-pulled cart. At this point Padre Chico aided the comunidade by obtaining a forty year old logging truck donated by a Swiss mission in Goiás. With the truck, Camutá increased the rate of extraction. Over the next several years they used the profits and a bank loan to buy two chainsaws, a second, newer truck, and to install a small sawmill (the motor was donated by the Padre). The comunidade also expanded agricultural production, planting rice, beans, corn, and fruit trees in addition to their manioc gardens. The profits from lumber and agricultural crops allowed the comunidade to greatly improve their standard of living. New houses with tile roofs were built, radios, bicycles, home furnishings, and kitchen utensils were purchased, and even a canoe with a motor was acquired.

Camutá's success in timber extraction did not come without external challenges. Soon after the comunidade began extracting and hauling logs out on the hand-pulled cart, commercial loggers became interested in the area. On two occasions in the early 1980s timber firms attempted to invade the land. The first occasion involved a company named Banicoba. Banicoba had been scouting in Itá for

various hardwoods to export to Breves. They learned from local compradors that there were extensive stands of timber near Camutá on unowned land, that there was an adequate port in the area, and that there were several kilometers of logging road already built. Banicoba was next introduced to a man who claimed to own the land where the port was located. The company obtained a verbal agreement to use the port from him. Several days later a barge loaded with equipment and workers arrived at the port near Camutá. Upon anchoring, the foreman of the extracting crew asked a nearby resident if they could unload their equipment. The woman in the house told the foreman her husband was not home and asked him to wait a day until her husband returned. As the company waited, the word that Banicoba wanted to extract timber reached the Camutá comunidade.

Camutá immediately recognized Banicoba as a threat to the future of their group. They knew that competition for the area's timber would rob them of their opportunity to develop an agricultural colony. The comunidade was well aware of the practice of outsiders coming to Itá, removing resources and wealth, and then leaving nothing behind. The comunidade felt that they had first rights to the timber since they were first in the area and since they intended to use the profits locally to develop their colony, not to transfer profits to some wealthy family in Belém, São Paulo, or overseas. The comunidade was also aware that

Camutá had as much legal right to the land and timber as any timber firm did.

The comunidade called a meeting in the chapel. People living nearby Camutá who would be affected by the timber extraction were encouraged to attend. Representatives from Banicoba were also invited and attended. The representatives were shocked when they saw over a hundred women and men attending the meeting. The comunidade started the meeting by informing the company that the verbal agreement they received to use the port was improper. The comunidade had built the port and had rights in it (even though their ownership of the port was questionable). In addition, the logging road was property of Camutá. Following these statements, the comunidade questioned the company for several hours about labor arrangements and profit sharing. The comunidade learned the firm planned to quickly cut through the area using chainsaws and imported labor. The firm also did not intend to pay any fees for using Camutá's port or road. In the debate that ensued the firm offered to let Camutá's men extract alongside their workers. However, the company agreed to pay only a low fee per tree extracted.

After the meeting had ended, the comunidade decided that their interests were not served by allowing the firm access to the timber. The comunidade realized that profits would be much higher and timber reserves would last much longer if they controlled extraction instead of working for

Banicoba. In addition, many members had fears that Banicoba might opt to buy the land and expel the people presently living there. They figured it was better to keep the company as far away from their land as possible.

When the representatives of Banicoba were informed of the decision they were furious. They refused to let simple "caboclos" (a racist term referring to rural inhabitants of the Amazon) impede their access to "free" timber. The representatives of Banicoba went to Mayor Alberto and demanded that he secure access. Alberto wrote a letter to Camutá telling them to let Banicoba in. He stated that Camutá had no right to the timber or land and that retaliations would follow if they did not submit. The comunidade met again and discussed the threats. They took solace in the teachings of Liberation Theology and realized they could overcome their oppression and exploitation only if they held fast in their resistance and stayed united. In the following days more threats were received. But the comunidade remained united. They invited Banicoba back for a second meeting. However, before the meeting took place, the main office of Banicoba decided to avoid the potential conflict and moved their operation to another municipality. The comunidade had resisted and won.

A few years following the Banicoba incident, a second, indirect invasion occurred. This incident began when a group of eight migrant families from the municipality of Breves asked to join the comunidade of Camutá. They were

accepted and integrated into the commune where they worked for a year without mishap. By the second year, however, a local timber comprador desirous of Camutá's timber persuaded the eight Brevenese (from the town of Breves) families to break from Camutá and extract timber for him. The comprador, named José Paiva, promised to finance the Breveneses and assured them of higher returns than they earned in the commune. The Breveneses divested from the commune and with their capital built a new hamlet which was called Serraria. José provided them with a truck, chainsaws, and a sawmill. He told the Breveneses that they could buy this equipment with profits from extraction. José also supplied the hamlet with food while their gardens matured.

The departure of the Brevenese families marked the second attempt to invade and extract timber from the land behind Camutá. José Paiva pushed the Brevenese to extract large quantities of timber. At first the Camutá comunidade accepted Serraria's logging. They expected the Breveneses to apply their profits and develop a agricultural colony as Camutá had. However, within a year it became obvious that the Serraria settlement existed only to extract timber for their patrão. The Breveneses put little effort into planting gardens. They were várzea people who previously subsisted by fishing and extracting and were not accustomed to full time farming. Instead, they spent most of their time extracting and sawing wood. As a result of not

planting, the Breveneses relied heavily on importing food and also hunting game. They sent individuals out to hunt daily. The daily hunting quickly began to deplete the game upon which Camutá also depended.

To make matters worse, José Paiva severely exploited the Breveneses to the point that they were hopelessly in debt. José paid the workers only a fraction of the value of the wood, prohibited them from selling to other companies paying higher prices, and charged dearly for importing food. José was also tardy in repairing the truck and chainsaws when they broke down. This impeded the hamlet's ability to produce at the same time it was importing expensive food. As a result, the Breveneses' standard of living was substantially reduced, especially in comparison to that of Camutá's. The Breveneses subsisted on poor diets (especially when game could not be found), lived in palm-covered shacks with few furnishings, and, despite a year's work, were nowhere near paying off their debts for the truck, chainsaws, and food.

Meanwhile in Camutá, nearly a year after the Breveneses had departed the comunidade reached its breaking point with Serraria's predatory use of the area's resources. The comunidade decided to stop the Serraria residents from excessive extraction by prohibiting use of Camutá's logging road. Once this decision was relayed to Serraria, a squabble erupted. The Breveneses were forced to begin the arduous task of cutting a second logging road parallel to

Camutá's. Still upset, the Camutaenses (from Camutá) blocked all roads with downed trees and brought all logging to a standstill.

This action greatly angered José Paiva who was enjoying heady profits from Serraria's extraction. José took the matter up with his brother, an ex-mayor of Itá and an official in PMDB, by now the majority party in Pará. He used his brother's influence to call in an agent from ITERPA (Instituto da Terra do Pará or Pará Land Institute) to settle the matter. It was fairly unusual for ITERPA to directly intervene in such a small dispute, and the ITERPA agent was slightly amused over the entire case. Nevertheless, the ITERPA agent, a topographer by training, reviewed the problem and suggested the two hamlets divide the land between them. He next surveyed a boundary along the logging road, giving the west to Camutá and the east to Serraria.

Both sides initially agreed to the land partition and the ITERPA agent left. However, within six months the dispute arose again as accusations were made that each hamlet had violated the boundary line and that a logging road extension made by the people of Serraria curved to the west. The ITERPA agent returned and resurveyed the line to settle the dispute. He also warned the two groups that technically neither were extracting timber legally and they should be more careful about publicizing the conflict.

At this point it appeared Camutá was resigned to allow the land invasion and harvesting of timber. But a second conflict arose that completely changed this scenario. This conflict was between the Serraria residents and their patrão. After several years of extracting timber and sawing lumber with next to nothing to show for their labor, the hamlet of Serraria turned against José. The Breveneses refused to extract exclusively for José and demanded their rights in the truck, which they figured they had paid for several times over. José retaliated and threatened to remove the truck, chainsaws, and sawmill. He also threatened to import another group of loggers to replace the Breveneses. But the Breveneses held fast in their demands. They threatened to take the dispute to court. At this point José backed down. He gave up his claims to the truck and chainsaws and his exclusive rights to buy Serraria's timber. He did retain control of the sawmill.

The Breveneses' willingness to confront their patrão was undoubtedly influenced by two factors. First, José did not own the land where they extracted timber. José, therefore, could not invoke the ultimate form of retaliation, expulsion from the land. This factor gave the Brevenese the opportunity to resist. Second, the ideology, actions, and successes of Camutá motivated the Breveneses to take action. The Breveneses had lived in Camutá and had been exposed to notions of worker's rights and worker resistance. They had heard how Camutá resisted the previous

land invasion through community unity. They were also continuously exposed to the disparity of their exploited existence and the relative prosperity of Camutá. The combination of these factors motivated the residents of Serraria to renegotiate their dependence on their patrão. With new arrangements, the Breveneses were free to extract at their own pace and to invest the higher returns received for agricultural production and various consumer commodities. Their standard of living increased substantially. At the same time, the threat to Camutá was eliminated. The comunidade at Camutá had never objected to the Breveneses using timber sales to develop their hamlet. It was only the threat of outsiders extracting timber and exporting the profits elsewhere that had caused the conflict.

At present the comunidade of Camutá has survived the two attempted land invasions and has remained intact. However, since this external pressure has dissipated, internal pressure in the comunidade has begun to weaken its unity. The main problem revolves around the functioning of the commune. The commune does not operate as members had envisioned. First, profits made from communal labor do not meet expectations. Francisco commented that once profits are assembled and comunidade debts paid, there often is little left to distribute. There is also a problem with individuals participating unequally in projects, yet expecting equal compensation. The problem became so

irritating to several members that they decided to reduce communal participation and increase individual work. Soon others followed their lead. By 1986 all communal labor has been reduced to joint work parties on Thursdays only. This limiting of communal work has resulted in the termination of the communal garden and a decline in the cantina. People also are extracting timber individually, or in small groups exchanging labor (mutirão). The truck is still used communally, however.

Another problem affecting the commune system is the continuous threat of land invasion. The comunidade realizes that to preserve their rights to land they have to obtain land titles. However, neither INCRA nor ITERPA will allow land to be registered in the name of the comunidade. The land agencies insist on individual titles to land. The people of Camutá have been forced to comply to ensure possession of land. Once individual titles are established, however, the owners are careful to protect their private resources. This results in a sharp decline in communal use of the land.

Despite internal disruptions, Camutá has been able to readjust. The communal system is gradually being replaced by a more individualistic system, although mutual aid and comunidade unity are still stressed. This continued cohesion of the group is all-important to its survival since more and more timber firms are active in the terra firme surrounding Camutá. The threat of land invasion is growing

steadily. Whether or not the comunidade can resist these invasions depends heavily on the unity of workers, as well as on aid from workers' organizations such as the rural union, and PT.

Nazaré

The next comunidade, called Nossa Senhora de Nazaré (Our Lady of Nazareth), is located on the Mojú River of the Great Island of Itá. It is a rubber and timber extracting "neighborhood" consisting of twenty-one families spread out along the river. The community is divided between small landowners (several brokers among them) and landless freguesas working for Lourenço Braga, the major landowner/trading post owner in the vicinity. When the Padre arrived in the early 1970s, he succeeded in congregating all of the residents, including Lourenço Braga. A chapel was built on Lourenço's property and the comunidade was formed. During the first few years of existence the comunidade functioned smoothly. Members met weekly for lay religious services and to discuss common problems. Topics of human rights, land rights, exploitation, and worker liberation were openly discussed, although without much fervor. The comunidade also increased their use of labor exchanges, although not greatly.

By the late 1970s the tranquility and general passivity of the comunidade began to change. The repeated messages of progressive social Catholicism eventually led some freguesas

to question Lourenço's business practices. They became critical of the extraordinary land tax he charged (deducting 30% of the value of all commodities produced or extracted by his freguesas), of the inflated prices of goods in his trading post (which operated sporadically), and of the very low prices paid for rubber and timber extracted.

The freguesas' view of Lourenço's dealings grew steadily worse after the small landowning members of the comunidade formed a cooperative to sell their rubber directly to a rubber firm. By selling in bulk, and bypassing Lourenço's trading post, they received a price several times higher than Lourenço paid his freguesas. Next the small landowning members opened a cantina which undersold Lourenço's post by a substantial amount. Upon seeing the difference in prices, Lourenço's freguesas became resentful of the price gouging they suffered. Some began protesting to Lourenço about exploitation. They were backed up by other comunidade members, most of whom were independent small landowners. The comunidade made references to Liberation Theology and to the immorality of Lourenço's dealings. Three other freguesas protested in a more traditional manner by selling their produce on the side to regatões for better prices. Lourenço learned of their activities and immediately ordered them from his land.

Lourenço's order to expel the freguesas sparked the comunidade into action. Part of the comunidade united behind the freguesas. They began challenging Lourenço's

rights to the land, especially since the freguesas had lived on the land for generations. They threatened to invoke Brazilian law to claim either occupant rights to the land or rights to indemnifications. Since Lourenço did not want to give up his land and lacked funds to pay for indemnifications, a stalemate ensued. The legal threat, plus the backing of part of the comunidade, shielded the freguesas from Lourenço's traditional rights to expel them.

Lourenço was greatly angered by the freguesa unrest. He blamed the Padre for inciting the resistance and promptly broke with the comunidade. The chapel was torn down. Lourenço's break with the comunidade divided the workers. Lourenço was patrão to many members who owed him loyalty as part of the patron-client relationship. Many individuals also had real and fictive kinship ties to Lourenço. This complicated any decision to side with the comunidade. In addition, Lourenço put pressure on his freguesas to break with the comunidade, promising he would succeed in expelling them from his land if they did not. As a result of this schism, Nazaré, unlike Camutá, did not develop into a closely knit solidarity. Instead it developed into a neighborhood with several opposing factions.

The group of workers which supported the comunidade's efforts were mainly small landowners. They had the economic independence, through rubber and timber extraction, to resist dominant class pressure and become politically active if they chose. The comunidade did retain some freguesas

from Lourenço's land. Their numbers were smaller due to Lourenço's pressures and threats. Nevertheless, a few participated in the comunidade and used the comunidade's backing to resist Lourenço's intimidations.

Despite the schism between the comunidade and Lourenço, part of the comunidade was able to reunite and remain active. The chapel was rebuilt on the property of one of the small landowners. Several strong leaders/brokers emerged who worked hard to maintain the comunidade's integrity. The leaders had been well trained by the Church. A few had even ventured to other cities, even to other states, to attend meetings on land problems and labor organization. They brought all their insights back to the comunidade and educated their co-workers. As a result of their activity, the comunidade remained intact and committed to social reform.

By the 1980s the relations between Lourenço and the comunidade reached a new low. Lourenço was in need of cash to pay back taxes on his land and had decided to cut palm-heart. Without informing his freguesas, Lourenço signed a three year contract with Gigante's extracting firm to cut and process the palm-heart. Lourenço was to receive \$.05 per tree processed. When Gigante arrived with his imported workers and started extracting, the freguesas were startled. Upon inquiring, the freguesas learned of the deal. A few freguesas quickly called a meeting of the comunidade to discuss the events. Several comunidades

neighboring Nazaré which were also affected by Lourenço's palm-heart extraction contract were asked to attend. The freguesas were disturbed because traditionally açaí (one type of tree used for palm-heart) was under the control of the freguesas. They had been free to extract, consume, and sell it to regatões if they chose. In addition, most small landowners bordering Lourenço's land had enjoyed de facto rights to collect the açaí. Lourenço was breaking these traditions by destroying the açaí to extract palm-heart.

During the meeting the comunidades came up with three objections to the extraction of palm-heart. First, açaí was very important to the freguesas and the small landowners as a dietary supplement and as a source of cash. Açaí drink is a major part of the várzea people's diet. It supplements the monotonous manioc and fish menu. People often comment that their stomachs never feel full without their bowl of açaí. The Nazarenses (people from Nazaré) were sure if they lost their supply of açaí they would suffer nutritionally (it has been shown that açaí contains high amounts of vitamin A - Moran 1981:105) and eventually would be forced to abandon their land.

In addition to its dietary value, by the 1980s the sale of açaí had become a valuable source of cash income. Like andiroba and acuuba seeds before their depletion, the freguesa, not the patrão, has control over açaí. Regatões from as far away as Breves, Macapá, and Alerim now come to the Mojú River to buy açaí since palm-heart

extracting has virtually eliminated the fruit from those municipalities. The profit from açai is fair. In a year a tree can produce about fifteen liters of seeds with a value of US \$5. The tree will produce for up to ten years and there are literally hundreds of thousands of them growing on the island. By contrast, felling the tree for palm-heart generates only \$.05 and terminates all subsequent profit from the tree. Making matters worse, profit from palm-heart extraction goes entirely to the landowner, leaving only a depleted environment for the freguesas. Since people on the island have already lost the oleaginous seeds as a source of needed cash income, the preservation of açai is all the more important.

The second objection was that the freguesas had planted many açai trees, especially around their houses. By local tradition and by Brazilian law the freguesas had rights in these trees that Lourenço was ignoring. Upon questioning, Lourenço maintained that açai would not be cut within 100 meters of his freguesa's houses. But this buffer zone did not protect all the planted açai. Furthermore, Gigante's crew had previously violated this zone. The freguesas were sure the violation would occur again.

The third objection was over the ownership status of the land where Lourenço was extracting. The comunidades challenged Lourenço to produce land titles proving he was the legal owner. Lourenço produced no such documents. The comunidades examined Lourenço's land tax status and found he

was severely delinquent (90% of landowners in Itá are, INCRA 1985). The comunidades next arrange for a lawyer from PT to search to search for a land title in Belém. None was found. With these results, the comunidades contended that the land had no legal owner. The lack of a legal owner meant that Lourenço had no right to extract palm-heart and that the freguesas who had lived on the land for generations could claim the land.

Lourenço rejected all of these objections. He told Gigante to continue extracting. The comunidades decided that unless they acted immediately they would become victims of Lourenço's greed, thereby losing a valuable resource and suffering a drop in their standard of living. So early one morning all the members of the Nazaré comunidade--freguesas and small landowners, men, women, and children--joined with members of neighboring comunidades and surrounded the palm-heart extractor's camp and refused to let them work. The extractors, who were poor workers from Breves, accepted the seige and waited for the company to make the next move. Lourenço and Gigante approached the judge and demanded that action be taken. The judge held a hearing and ruled that the comunidades had no right to impede extraction. The comunidades, however, did not accept this ruling. They contended the judge had no documents to back up Lourenço's claim and therefore had no grounds to make such a decision. Apparently the comunidades were correct since the judge made no attempt to have the decision enforced. The comunidades'

stalemate had worked. Gigante withdrew his workers from the area.

Nazaré's victory strengthened the internal cohesion of the comunidade. A common threat, the depletion of açaí, had overridden many of the segmentation tendencies between the landless freguesas and small landowners and allowed them to act in unison. And while the comunidade savored their victory and the preservation of their fruit, they were well aware that threats from the dominant class had not ended. At present palm-heart extraction in Itá is on the increase and other extraction firms are active in the Mojú area. The possibility of another attempt to cut palm-heart sometime soon in the future seems likely. Nazaré's ability to resist these intrusions will again depend on the comunidade's unity.

Jocojó

The third comunidade is located in the hamlet of Jocojó. Jocojó is situated on unowned terra firme several kilometers upstream from Itá. The comunidade is officially called São João (Saint John), however, it is generally referred to as Jocojó. As stated earlier, the hamlet is principally a manioc farming settlement, although residents frequently migrate to extract timber and rubber, and work at the Jarí tree plantation. The hamlet contains sixteen families who are closely tied by real and fictive kinship. Like Camutá, Jocojó had a certain unity before the arrival

of the Padre (Jocojó is an old settlement, dating back over a 100 years. Some people in Itá maintain that Jocojó was founded as a slave refuge or quilombo). The hamlet had a small chapel and its own graveyard. There were frequent labor exchanges to clear gardens and to build or repair houses (see Wagley 1976:69). A small dock had been built on the Amazon River to service the hamlet, and the path and igarapé (stream) to the hamlet were regularly cleaned. Until recently there was also a strong leader and broker of the hamlet, João Povo (see Wagley 1976:149, 158). João was humorously called the baron of Jocojó by outsiders. By the 1980s, however, João was too old to continue working so he moved to Itá to live with some relatives. No one has successfully filled the leadership position after João departed.

When the Padre arrived in the early 1970s, he easily persuaded the people in Jocojó to develop a comunidade. Essentially, the comunidade duplicated pre-existing organization in the hamlet. The only new organizational element introduced was a small cantina established in the mid-1980s. From the beginning the comunidade functioned smoothly with little internal dissention. The messages of worker liberation were taught and discussed. However, the Jocojoenses (from Jocojó) did not develop the level of political awareness or drive for activism as in the comunidades of Camutá and Nazaré. Several reasons were behind this difference. First, until the mid-1980s

Jocojoenesees had few external threats to their livelihood (no attempted land invasion or abusive patrão control). As a result, there was little motive to radicalize their political view and challenge the status quo.

Second, with the opening of the Jarí plantation in 1978, over half of the comunidade left. This migration deprived the comunidade of many of its more active members who were attracted to Liberation Theology. And third, there was a leadership void following the Jarí migration and the "retirement" of João Povo. The individuals that have succeeded João do not hold the hamlet together as in the past. They are also divided about the validity of progressive social Catholicism. This uncertainty pervades even the catechists who on several occasions have asked visitors if they think the Padre is a "communist."

As a result of these events, today Jocojó is not a politically cohesive comunidade. One indication of this lack of cohesion is the recent rise of land conflict within the group. The land conflict began when one family decided to get legal title to its land. The family obtained titles for three 100 hectare plots (one for the father and two for adult sons) and is now considering titling a fourth. The legalization of landholding has sent a wave of anxiety through the hamlet. The comunidade exists in a constricted area, bordered by várzea and river to the south and swamp (igapó) in all other directions. The Jocojoenses fear that if every family legalizes 100 hectare plots there will not

be enough farmable land to parcel out to all members of the comunidade. In addition, landholdings consist of irregular patches of land scattered in between swampy areas. Legalization of land will not recognize the patchwork nature of landholdings. As a result, people will be forced to include a large percentage of unfarmable swamp land in their 100 hectare plot. These fears are frequently discussed in the comunidade. But the various families continue to disagree and no remedy has been found.

A second event has further complicated the problem of land ownership. A recent migrant living on the várzea below Jocojó, Antônio Rosado, has taken out a land claim and is planning to extract timber. He has obtained assurances of financing from a local comprador. Antônio's plan is to extract from his land, which overlaps land claimed by families in Jocojó, then build a logging road and extract timber from land around the hamlet of Jocojó. Antônio has asked the people of Jocojó if they wish to extract for him. Some have agreed, while most are hesitant, especially those with overlapping claims. A debate has developed within the comunidade. Several meetings have been held to discuss the matter. The meetings often end in argument, sometimes with individuals storming away in anger. A few people have consulted with the Church's CPT representatives in town. They have been warned by the CPT that a logging road can lead to land invasion by other timber firms, or even by migrants looking for land. These

Jocojoenses also realize that much profit will be lost by extracting for a second party instead of themselves. And finally, timber extraction will disrupt hunting activities by scattering game. The CPT advised the comunidade that the best way to avoid invasion is to title their land.

Once again the community of Jocojó is faced with the dilemma of legalizing landholdings. If Antônio goes ahead with his plans to extract with the aid of some Jocojoenses, then the comunidade will be forced to title their land to protect themselves. However, if they title their land, existing divisions of land use will be disrupted and farmable land will be in short supply as some families will get more usable land than others. As a result, some families will be forced to leave. The comunidade remains divided and has no joint plan of action. As of yet, Antônio has not begun to extract and there is some hope in Jocojó that he lacks adequate capital. Nevertheless, the lack of internal cohesion against an outside threat leaves the comunidade open to abuse and possible disintegration.

Ilha de Macaco

The final example of a comunidade is São Pedro (Saint Peter) located on the Ilha de Macaco (Monkey Island). Ilha de Macaco is a small island just off the main channel of the Amazon River ten kilometers upstream from Itá. The majority of the island is owned by several cattle ranching families. Of these, Benedito Santos is the largest

landholder. In fact, all of the members of São Pedro (fifteen families) have family members working for Benedito as ranch hands. They also maintain small subsistence gardens. Despite working in cattle ranching, the people of São Pedro are best classified as landless freguesas. Before Padre Chico arrived in Itá, the workers were organized by patron-client and debt ties to Benedito. There was little freguesa activity that did not involve Benedito, except for an occasional labor exchange to clear a garden.

After the Padre arrived, Benedito paternalistically arranged for his workers to form a comunidade. Although Benedito did not attend comunidade functions, he kept informed of their activities. The comunidade began functioning without incident. The Padre would come by and visit every other month and the comunidade would send individuals to Church meetings several times a year. Slowly, several comunidade members became interested in progressive social Catholicism. They began discussing problems of exploitation and expressing a desire to form a cantina to bypass Benedito's trading post.

The suggestions made by progressive members of the comunidade, however, were met with strong resistance. Most comunidade members considered Benedito a good patrão who diligently looked after their needs. They considered a cantina an immoral affront to their patrão. It was also considered a dangerous activity since many of the comunidade members lived on Benedito's land and feared exclusion if

they offended their patrão. Assurances by the progressive members that there was safety in united worker resistance and that expulsion was unlikely since all individuals had occupant land rights to their houses and gardens did not lessen this fear. They knew Benedito was a strong patrão who was not easily deterred.

With the encouragement of the Church, the progressive comunidade members continued their battle. They decided to take attendance at meetings and services and use this as a criterion to judge whether a family was eligible for baptisms or weddings. In this manner they hoped to pressure people to unite in the comunidade and to listen to the messages of political-religious conscious-raising. The recording of attendance caused unrest among some families who did not care to participate regularly, but wished to have their children baptized. Other families were upset since they lived far away and traveling to the chapel was a hardship. People began complaining. Several individuals took the matter to Benedito, still considered the final arbiter for conflict on the island.

Benedito listened carefully to his freguesas. He explained he was not unsympathetic to the progressive view of the Church. In fact, he understood the problems of exploitation and had worked to minimize them on his land (his trading post prices were lower than most, his wages were higher than most, and working conditions on his land were better than most). However, he was wary of workers

organizing against him. He was also particularly critical of the progressives and the Padre inciting the unrest. He explained that the freguesas should work with him, instead of against him.

Benedito suggested to the more conservative freguesas that they should take control of the comunidade. Since they were in the majority, and since the comunidade was theoretically democratic, they should vote on the matter of recording attendance. The conservative members acted on Benedito's advice and succeeded in changing the comunidade's rules. This victory effectively mitigated the progressive members influence and they were essentially silenced. The conflict also created a distrust among comunidade members toward the progressive Church. Today, most comunidade members feel resentful toward the Padre (influenced in part by Benedito's dislike for the Padre). This has been understood by the Padre who has gradually reduced his visits to the island to once a year. In the meanwhile, the comunidade continues to function, but only to give spiritual consultation to its members. The progressive social Catholic agenda is not discussed.

The Origins of the Worker's Party

In all sixty-six comunidades of Itá the Church attempts to raise the political-religious consciousness of members and encourage them to participate in political movements. As shown above, in comunidades with small

landowners, terra firme farmers, and strong brokers, such as Camutá and Nazaré, these attempts are fairly successful. Once politicized, people begin taking an active interest in party politics. However, up until the 1980s there has been no party in Itá which comes close to representing their interests. PDS served the interests of a small elite faction and was largely under Alberto Viana's control. To the politicized comunidade members, Alberto represented oppression and exploitation incarnate. The comunidade members also saw Alberto manipulate the formation of the opposition party PMDB. Members of the comunidades clearly realized that they needed a third party which did not serve the interests of the local elite.

By 1980, many of the comunidade representatives who had traveled outside of Itá to Church meetings came into contact with members of the fledgling PT party. As stated earlier, PT, which formed in the industrial sectors of São Paulo, is heavily influenced by progressive social Catholicism. When the Itaenses heard the ideological and political agenda of PT, they recognized common goals and became interested. PT, in turn, encouraged the Itaenses to form their own branch of the party in Itá. With the aid of PT representatives in Belém, Itá did establish PT in time for the 1982 elections.

From the beginning PT in Itá has been closely tied to the Church. The Church as an organization does not directly support PT, but all of PTs leaders are active catechists.

These leaders draw heavily on the comunidade movement for support. In a sense, they take their political campaign to the pulpit. During services they attack the dominant class and their political apparatus. They strongly urge members to participate in opposition politics. After services they propagandize for PT. They explained how PT will work for the working class's interests. Through this method the party has been able to recruit approximately 40% of eligible voters in Itá.

For the 1982 elections PT developed a vague platform for political economic reform. The leaders talked generally of promoting small producer agriculture through loan programs and by obtaining technical advice. They mentioned organizing a market cooperative to distribute manioc and other commodities produced on the mainland to the islands of Itá, which would bypass trading posts and also develop an internal market for agricultural goods. The leaders also talked of support for workers in securing land rights. However, the bulk of PT's campaign propaganda consisted of critiques of the dominant class' privileged position in Itá and their abuse of power. In particular, they focused on Alberto Viana and his well known corruption. PT promised that under their administration misappropriation of funds, abuse of payrolls, and political favoritism would not occur.

PT's vague platform was due in part to the national composition of the party. PT is essentially an urban based party dealing with problems of the industrial labor sector.

The party's line on agrarian problems is undeveloped. By the mid-1980s the party's line on agrarian problems eventually became insensitive to peasant issues (Henfrey 1986:15). This void in party ideology has forced PT of Itá to borrow heavily from CPT of the Catholic Church for its view on agrarian problems.

Despite this problem of a vague platform, the party has had little trouble attracting its sizable following. PT's remarkable success in voter recruitment is due to several factors. One is the increasing threat to worker's livelihood through increases in resource depletion (oleaginous seeds, açai, timber) and fears of dispossession from land. These two problems have been intensified by the development efforts initiated in the 1960s and 1970s. These threats overcome the traditional segmentation of the working class, particularly between the small-landowners, independent terra firme farmers, and to a lesser degree, the landless frequesas. The urban poor are equally affected by these problems, but tend to intensify ties to the dominant class to overcome these pressures. The party also has grown rapidly because it is able to use the pre-existing grass-roots organization of the comunidades. Finally, PT has become strong because it is the only viable alternative to the dominant class oriented PDS and PMBD, both of which were initially manipulated by Alberto Viana.

In the elections PT presented a full slate of candidates. For mayor they choose Renato Fonseca. Renato

is a well liked manioc farmer/extractor from the interior. In the mid 1970s he came to live in town and work as a caretaker in the Church. Initially, he was courted by Alberto to serve in ARENA and run for council member. Renato refused, preferring to remain apolitical at the time. Renato continued working in the Church and soon got a position working in the archives. By this time Renato's direct exposure to the Church and its progressive theology had effectively politicized him. He became an active catechist and obtained a good understanding of social Catholicism. In the Padre's absence he often held services in the main Church. He became very visible to the public.

When PT formed Renato decided to work in its directorate. Alberto, upon learning this, rebuffed Renato, saying he felt he had lost a son. Nevertheless, Renato continued his endeavors. When candidates for political office were chosen, Renato seemed an attractive candidate to rural workers and was drafted. He left his Church job during the campaign, but still preached in Church. Renato's opponents in the mayorial elections sharply criticized his close association with the Church. His opponents charged Renato with using Mass to campaign for votes.

In the mayorial elections Cecília of PDS won by combining the total sum of PDS votes (which included three other candidates). Renato, however, received the greatest number of votes for a single candidate. PT also made impressive showings in the council member race. They won

two of the seven seats (one of the winning PT candidates came from the Nazaré comunidade). These political gains severely altered the status quo in Itá. The dominant class, weakened economically by years of inflation and depression, now found their political hegemony broken and their very future in question. There were great fears that PT might win control of the municipality in the next elections, four to six years in the future.

The success of PT has created a number of reactions among the dominant class. At one extreme, some members of the dominant class now seek to make amends with the worker's party. One example in particular is Alberto Viana. With the rise of PT, Alberto has actually lost considerable power. In part this has occurred because PT has heavily eroded Alberto's following in the interior. On the other hand, Alberto's extensive corruption has gained him a considerable number of enemies among the dominant class, particularly after the break with mayor Cecília. Being a clever politician, Alberto has attempted to regroup his support by aligning himself with PT, at least in appearances. Toward this end he has asked the Padre for forgiveness and now broadcasts sympathetic messages about PT on his loudspeakers. PT, however, completely rejects Alberto's ploy. The party directorate has passed a resolution protesting Alberto's disguised interference in their affairs. In Church the catechists speak of false prophets asking for forgiveness when their only intention is

to deceive. Although they mention no names, those attending Mass have no trouble indentifying who is being condemned.

At the other extreme, several members of the dominant class have intensified their criticism of PT and of the Church. They persistently call the party and the Church communist and warn the public that the communists will commit atrocities if elected. Among the absurdities being spread about PT are: the communists (i.e. PT) will take away all individually owned land, they will appropriate all production, and they will rape women. Many landowners put increased pressure on freguesas to break with the comunidades. In one case on Muruxál River (just east of Mojú River on the Great Island of Itá) the patrão openly prohibites his freguesas from attending any of the Church's meetings outside of Mass.

The Struggle for the Rural Union

Following the elections of 1982, members of PT, and more generally the worker's movement, understood the dominant class's weakened position and intensified their drive for reform. The next step was to gain control of the Sindicato Rural, or rural worker's union. The rural union in its present form was established in 1976. It was part of the military government's efforts to co-opt rural workers into a controlled, corporate organization. Through a controlled union the government hoped to avoid the rebirth

of peasant leagues which effectively mobilized workers in the Northeast just before the 1964 revolution.

The rural union formed in Itá was small and a decidedly pro-status quo organization (its function favored the dominant class' interests). Active membership in the union accounted for less than 8% of eligible rural workers in the municipality. The union functioned mainly as a beneficiary organization, providing sick members access to specific hospital facilities in Belém. Beyond these functions, the union served as a referral service for individuals with landownership problems. Toward this end, members were directed to land titling agencies (INCRA and ITERPA) in Breves and Belém. The union, however, offered little counseling on legal matters, offered no financial aid for legal fees, and took no active stance on questions of occupant land rights. Due to the lack of services provided by the union, and the high cost of monthly dues (approximately US \$1 per month), only 1058 workers were paying members by 1983.

For several years individuals within the worker's movement had been interested in controlling the union and redirecting its functions. These individuals had learned that the union could be an important tool in combating dominant class hegemony and promoting worker prosperity. They had witnessed examples of rural unions along the Transamazon Highway, in the Bragatine area east of Belém, and in Santarém actively pursuing worker's class interest

through legal defense of occupant land rights, through organization of market cooperatives, and through technical advice for small farmer production. In Itá, the leaders of the worker's movement envisioned a rural union which would be active in the following manners: securing occupant land rights or indemnification rights, forming a worker cooperative to buy and sell goods directly in Belém (bypassing all trading posts), obtaining an additional doctor and a hospital boat for the interior, contracting an agricultural extension agent for the municipality, and finding a financial institution to provide small farmer loans.

The first attempt by the worker's movement to wrest control of the rural union from the state apparatus occurred in 1982. Union elections were held, but due to dominant class influence, which included pressuring freguesas to vote against the worker's movement, buying votes, and calling in federal police to intimidate union voters, a union slate (Chapa 1) aligned with the dominant class won. The leaders of the worker's movement, however, learned a valuable lesson in political tactics through their defeat. In preparation for the next union elections in 1986 the worker's movement undertook a registration drive for rural workers. The recruiting took place in the comunidades. Even during Mass in the town church people were encouraged to join the union. Once registered, the worker's movement regularly kept after workers to pay their dues in order to retain voter

eligibility. By early 1986 the worker's movement estimated they had 1700 registered voters while the conservative faction could claim only 700. The worker's movement presented their slate for elections (Chapa 2) and increasingly circulated their views on how the union should function.

At this point the dominant class in Itá realized the imminence of their defeat in the upcoming elections. This defeat, they felt, would be an unacceptable blow to their already faltering influence. The dominant class was also receiving warnings from outside political sources (state senators, PDS and PMDB party headquarters) not to let Chapa 2 of the worker's movement win. The battle lines had to be drawn immediately. The dominant class, however, had few legal methods to stop Chapa 2. The deadline for registration and eligibility to vote in the upcoming elections had already passed. Union rules specified that individuals must join and pay their dues for six months prior to elections to be eligible to vote.

Since the elections were less than six months away, the dominant class could not legally recruit any new members. They had to rely on pressuring or bribing current members. Toward this end the dominant class had been relying on patron-client ties to produce votes. But as shown above, patron-client ties were weakened by inflation, depression, and the worker resistance of the 1980s. As a result, the dominant class could not muster enough votes through

traditional methods. Facing certain defeat, the dominant class turned to a poorly planned, poorly executed, and poorly concealed attempt to falsify the voter register.

The voter registration fraud was performed by the outgoing President of the rural union, Antônio Pinto. Antônio was a confidant of the local elite who had helped him get elected in 1982. Politically he was aligned with PMDB. In March of 1986 Antônio began to systematically alter voter registration forms (fichas). Antônio had a lot of work to perform since Chapa 2 of the worker's movement's had nearly a three to one lead on Chapa 1 of the dominant class. Antônio used several methods to falsify fichas. To lessen the number of union members eligible to vote who were sympathetic to Chapa 2, he changed dates of registration to after the voting deadline, he failed to record dues paid, he failed to process fichas, he falsified information, and he simply lost fichas. To increase conservative voter's membership supporting Chapa 1, Antônio kept registering workers to vote past the voting deadline.

Antônio was not adept at secretly falsifying forms. He openly changed records during working hours in the rural union headquarters. This callousness caused his actions to be discovered. A member of the worker's movement was in the union headquarters and noticed Antônio was processing fichas for voting status after the voter deadline. This individual immediately reported his observation to several leaders of the worker's movement. Among these leaders were

several union delegados or neighborhood officials. A group of twenty men, all members of the union, decided to investigate. They sent a message to the judge informing her of their activities. The judge was out of town so they forwarded the message to the mayor and then proceeded to the union headquarters to inquire about the alleged improprieties. Upon entering the building the twenty men demanded a meeting with Antônio. Antônio refused, saying he was busy. The men pressed Antônio to answer questions about late registration. Antônio panicked and grabbed a stack of thirty-three voter fichas and attempted to tear them up. The stack was too thick to tear and the group of men restrained Antônio and saved the fichas. The fichas were all irregular and were being processed after the deadline. Antônio fled the union unharmed.

Upon searching the building, the twenty men found numerous improprieties which clearly exposed the registration scandal along with a number of other irregularities. For example, registration books (as opposed to fichas) were either out of date or destroyed by termites. Account books of voter's dues were not maintained and the use of money not recorded. More critical for the elections, voter fichas were in complete disarray. Only 1280 fichas were encountered out of an estimated total of 2400. Of these, only 225 were appropriately processed. Nearly all of the 225 were supporters of Chapa 1.

Francisco Teixeira of Camutá was one of the men examining the union records. From Francisco's neighborhood chapter alone he found forty members inexplicably taken off the voting list. Francisco, himself, was listed as ineligible because he was classified as a truck driver and therefore belonged to another union (Francisco knew how to drive the logging truck, but this hardly disqualified him from the rural worker's union). The men also found that names, photos, and signatures on forms did not match.

Immediately following the worker invasion of the union, the news spread through town and people began to amass around the union building. Accusations were exchanged and arguments grew more intense among the crowd. Chapa 2 representatives declared Chapa 1 to be in violation of election rules and claimed the union. The police were called in to restore order. The Padre, upon hearing the news, also went to the union. At this point the police arrested several of the Chapa 2 leaders and the Padre. They were detained for about an hour. Members of Chapa 1 alleged the Chapa 2 people had illegally entered the building and seized material. Chapa 1 also charged that Chapa 2 was behind the fraud, that Antônio had been roughed up, and that money had been stolen from the union during the intrusion. These arrests and the apparently trumped up charges infuriated the Chapa 2 followers. A few of the members talked of taking radical action, such as taking over the Town Hall, bank, and the meat market. These

individuals, however, were restrained by the majority, including the intervention by the Padre after he was released.

After the turmoil of arrests had settled down, the Chapa 2 leaders became suspicious that the fraud evidence might be destroyed if not protected. As a precaution, they photographed all the evidence and then sealed it in a bag under their protection. Still fears remained that the conservative faction might attempt to take over the union building and expel all Chapa 2 followers from union membership. As a second precaution, members of the worker's movement decided to occupy the union building and make sure the conservative faction did not take control. What followed from this point on was an impressive show of strength and organization by the worker's movement. The active comunidades were called upon to send members, food, and money to support the union occupation. Aid was also sent from the rural union in Santarém, from São Paulo, from CUT and from CPT. For the next fifty-three days (March 25-May 17, 1986) a constant vigil of the union was kept by groups of women and men numbering between 110 and 180. The women and men camped out in or surrounding the union forming a human barrier to protect the building and its records.

The union occupation shocked and polarized the town of Itá. The mayor reacted and called for the federal police. In response, only six soldiers were flown in from Santarém (it appears Itá's disturbance was not taken too seriously

by the military). They did come prepared with tear-gas. Once in town, the soldiers kept clear of the union. They did not wish to incite violence since they were severely outnumbered.

As the union occupation progressed, counter-demonstrations by supporters of the conservative forces were carried out. These counter-demonstrations often consisted of shouting insults and throwing rocks and bottles at the union building. Many attacks occurred late at night after dances by drunken men. Other forms of harassment included tearing down a wooden fence surrounding the union building, putting up banners with anti-PT and anti-Chapa 2 slogans, making death threats to Chapa 2 candidates and the Padre, and the sinking of the Padre's boat. The Padre's boat had become a symbol of the worker's movement. The boat, named Livramento (Deliverance) was the Padre's principal means of communicating with the scattered rural workers. The boat disappeared one night. Upon inspection it was found that one of the mooring ropes had been cut. An investigation by the local police was conducted, but predictably yielded no information.

The leaders of the worker's movement stressed to their members not to be provoked by harassment. They intended the union occupation to be a form of passive, not violent, resistance. However, the workers were minimally prepared to defend themselves, if violence occurred. As it turned out,

the union occupation was completed without any violence on the part of the workers.

From the outset of the conflict, Chapa 2 had tried to use political channels within the union to settle the matter. They immediately informed the regional union representative located in Breves of the fraud. The representative, who was affiliated with PMDB and thus opposed the Chapa 2 workers who were affiliated with PT, at first refused to review the matter. The Chapa 2 leaders then decided to take the fraud evidence directly to the union headquarters in Belém. In Belém they were persistently snubbed by the upper level union officials and government representatives (both from PMDB). Frustrated, the Chapa 2 leaders returned to Itá. At this point, Chapa 2 decided to continue the union occupation until action was taken. This persistence, plus media exposure of the problem in a Belém newspaper, finally forced the regional union representative in Breves to send an investigating team. Upon reviewing the evidence, the team concluded there was definite election fraud and that Chapa 1's allegations were unfounded. These conclusions were sent to Breves where they disappeared (they were very embarrassing for PMBD so they were covered up). No legal actions were taken.

Before leaving Itá, the investigating team suggested that Chapa 2 go ahead and organize a union convention to elect members. In this way they could have a functioning union while legal matters were decided. Chapa 2 took the

advice of the investigators and held a convention. Several thousand people attended. They held a massive parade through town which further shocked the dominant class at the strength of the movement. In the convention the Chapa 2 candidates were elected to office. The results were sent to Breves. The Breves representative, however, refused to accept the results. Instead, the representative asked both union factions to send her a list of candidates from which she would choose an interim union board until registration problems could be rectified and sanctioned elections held. Predictably, the representative chose two Chapa 1 candidates for president and secretary. One Chapa 2 candidate was chosen for treasurer. He was a Church catechist from the Nazaré comunidade.

After the selection, the union occupation was called off. Yet, Chapa 2 was determined to keep a strong presence in the union to monitor voter re-registration. This presence intimidated the two Chapa 1 appointees who then refused to take office. Both of these men were inexperienced with union matters. They had been nominated by Chapa 1 since they were closely aligned with the dominant class. The union, however, continued to function with the lone Chapa 2 treasurer working. Chapa 2 remained busy with re-registration and preparing for upcoming elections which were rescheduled for late summer, 1986. Chapa 2 was confident of victory. Only a dissolution of the rural union in Itá could defeat them.

The Future

At the end of the research period the worker's movement was poised to capture the rural union and a variety of political posts in future elections. Their success will depend on several variables. One is their continued recruitment of followers. In 1986 one local politician estimated that party membership in Itá ran as follows: PT--40%; PMDB--35%, PDS--25%. PMDB and PDS leaders are aware that they can defeat PT only by a combined effort. At present some members of PDS and PMDB are searching for compromise candidates for mayor and town council to unify the dominant class and their supporters. If the two parties are successful in overcoming their petty differences (which is no small feat), then PT will have difficulties in the elections.

A second variable for success is the workers' movement's ability to resist outside repression. While the local dominant class is not overly powerful, regional interest groups with access to the government and the military are wary of Itá's worker's activities. The timber companies, in particular, have a growing interest in terra firme timber and might easily react to organized worker resistance to exploitation of that timber. This problem is not lost on the local members of the worker's movement. Many understand that government repression and violence are the price they will pay for success. They also realize that

political assassinations against them might be carried out as they have been in the south of Pará.

Renato Fonseca, the former PT candidate for mayor, put this threat of repression and assassination in perspective. According to Renato, all people live with fear. If you are comfortable, if you have a lot of things and freedom, you have a lot of fear. If you are less well off, fear diminishes as necessity is more pressing. And if you are in very bad straits, landless and hungry, then fear no longer stands in the way. You are scared, but your need to survive overcomes your fear and you act. Renato continued with an old saying, when you met a bicho (animal) in the jungle, if you run it will kill you, if you freeze it will eat you. So you must confront it if you are to survive. Confronting the bicho is what the worker's movement is all about.

A third variable for the worker's movement's success is their effectiveness in governing once in power. As an opposition movement, much of their energies to date have been spent on conscious-raising and criticizing the dominant class. Many promises are given that life will be better, land ownership secure, and food more plentiful if the workers are in power. If these promises are not fulfilled, if expectations are too high, the movement will be discredited and greatly weakened.

To fulfill their promises the worker's movement has to overcome a wide range of obstacles. With election to office, the PT will be an opposition party to the state and

federal government. This means funds and political favors from the federal or state governments will be minimal. Petitions for doctors, for agricultural agents, for banks offering small farmer loans, etc. might be ignored or postponed indefinitely by hostile politicians (this problem is experienced by the present administration of Cecília, PDS, who has asked for many of the above from the state government, PMDB, to no avail). Beyond the political problems, there are longstanding social, economic, and ecological obstacles to improved living standards. As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, predatory extractionism resulting in depletion of natural resources, poor soils for agriculture, lack of an internal market, transfer of value to the South and overseas, and exploitative patron-client and credit-debt relations have been actively impoverishing the community for over 350 years. Reversing these trends will take a radical effort.

Despite these herculean obstacles, the question still remains, if not the worker's movement, then who will best govern in favor of the workers' interests? Up until 1986 it is clear to a large number of Itaeneses that the dominant class, the state government, and the federal government are unwilling or incapable. To these people, the worker's movement, with all its faults, seems their best choice.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The case study presented in this dissertation has sought to analyze the economic and political changes stemming from the impact of post-1964 regional development policies in the riverine municipality of Itá. These changes are discussed within a historical framework which identifies various ecological, economic, and political adjustments that have shaped and limited the outcome of modern-day developmental efforts. Details of contemporary economic change and resistance are presented to demonstrate the complex and often paradoxical results of capitalist development in the area. Also discussed are contemporary local, political responses to economic and political initiatives which lead to radical change from the former status quo. In short, the study relates the complex internal workings which have marked one community's increasing contact with the Brazilian capitalist system.

The study of Itá serves as only one case study within a highly complex and differentiated process of capitalist development in the Amazon. Itá's place within the expansive region is that of a largely unimportant, overlooked, "backward", poor, riverine community. Few government planners know or worry about the municipality. Its only redeeming economic value in the last twenty years

has been its timber which, on the whole, has been exported to other locations for processing. Despite its relative unimportance, the municipality has been deeply affected by regional and national policies which have brought to bear new and increased pressures on the community leading it to the brink of class conflict.

Historical developments in the region and municipality lay the foundations for contemporary changes. Chapter two describes some 350 years of Euro-Brazilian intervention in the area which demolished indigenous populations through disease, warfare, and slavery. The surviving groups were forced into a colonial system which transformed self-sufficient and basically egalitarian Amerindian groups into an exploited and non-autonomous class. The dominant class colonists and missionaries forced Indian, mestizo, and later African slave workers into commodity production in which surplus was appropriated by the former. This transformation of the Amerindians into commodity producers, plus depopulation and the resulting social disintegration led to the destruction of much of the indigenous cultures. Included in the destruction was the loss of the accumulated knowledge about human adjustment to the multiple econozones of the Amazon, especially the knowledge and necessary social organization required to utilize the highly productive várzea.

Euro-Brazilian intervention also established an extractive economy with a history of resource depletion.

Through successive cycles of predatory extraction, the area was plundered for its *drogas do sertão* and jungle and river fauna. In Itá the loss of ecologically and economically valuable flora and fauna impoverished the environment as well as restricted options for potential future use of the environment. In addition, the extreme emphasis given to extraction drained scarce labor (a result of Indian depopulation) from agricultural production leading to persistent food shortages.

By the rubber boom period (1850-1920) the *aviamento* social relations of production evolved and dominated the economy. The principal means to generate wealth and to control workers under this system was through manipulation of exchange rather than control of access to the means of production (land). Merchants and trading post owners became the dominant economic and political actors. Elaborate credit-debt and patron-client relationships between trading posts and workers were established. Under these ties workers were encouraged to produce rubber and not food crops. As a result, food shortages again intensified. The rubber period also left a legacy of poorly defined landownership. Land held little intrinsic value, except for the extractive resources it contained. As a result, property boundaries tended to be vague and land titles often non-existent.

Between the rubber bust and the contemporary period the area entered a long and bitter depression. This depression

was only temporarily interrupted by a mini-rubber boom in 1942-1945. By the 1950s and 1960s the depression was compounded by triple-digit inflation. The depression and inflation made buying and selling goods on credit unprofitable. The result was a reduction in the number of trading posts operating in the area. This loss over the means of exchange reduced the dominant class's control over the working class and led to a loss of credit sources and access to imported goods for workers. Growing poverty forced a steady migration of people from the area. Despite the poor economy, Itá continued to engage in extraction of devalued forest flora and largely neglected agriculture which remained on a subsistence level.

Contemporary forces of change operating on Itá began after the military coup in 1964. Since this date the Amazonian economy has increasingly come under control of the centralized military government and industrial complex located in the South. In general, the Amazon's resources are now used as a stop-gap solution to pay mounting debts in the South and to serve as a new source of investment through the exploitation of timber, mining, and cattle ranching. The state directly intervenes in this process by providing infrastructure and giving incentives, loans, and concessions to national and international firms to further development goals.

In Itá the state's development efforts have led to an economic boom in timber extraction. This boom is

accompanied by limited developments in lumber production, palm-heart extraction, rubber extraction, oil exploration, food production, migration, and the urban job sector. These activities have brought varying degrees of prosperity, institutional change, and conflict. Prosperity, for example, is measured by increased consumption of imported goods and improvement of housing. Nearly all working class families that have a member working in wood enjoy this type of modest prosperity. Trading post patrões, landowners, and comprador middlemen enjoy greater prosperity. However, it is the extraction companies, which are always extra-local and often extra-regional or multinational, that accumulate the greatest wealth from the boom. This uneven distribution of wealth is not lost upon the local working class. Through access to mass media and personal accounts of change in other areas, many Itaenses see first hand that prosperity in Itá has not kept pace with the larger cities or even surrounding municipalities. Increasing levels of relative deprivation and frustration, therefore, accompany the modest economic gains.

Development efforts have also brought about modest institutional changes. The trading post remains the major articulation institution between local producers and other actors in the world market. Many of the large national and international firms chose to articulate with the local economy through this institution instead of introducing capitalist relations of production. An exception are the

semi-independent contractors who acted as middlemen between producers and the lumber firms. However, in many cases the more successful of these contractors are those who can mimic patron-client relationships common in the trading post. Those contractors relying on straight wages without giving loans or credit are at a disadvantage and easily lose their labor supply. A second exception occurred with the capitalistic sawmill and Petrobrás. Again, in the case of the sawmill, management came to mimic traditional social relations of production through the establishment of a company trading post which sold on credit, some patron-client relationships, and the extension of credit rights for its workers in other stores in town. Petrobrás, by contrast, remained capitalistic in orientation and suffered the consequences of heavy labor turnover.

The modest institutional change experienced in Itá means that patterns of exploitation prevalent with rubber extraction under the *aviamento* system have changed only slightly with present day extraction. One change comes with the availability of cash and the reduction of debt. As more cash flows into the local economy, workers are increasingly able to pay off debts and break the trading post's absolute monopoly on *freguesa* exchange. The trading post does retain some control over workers since credit toward purchase of food, clothing, tools, and other necessities are still needed to sustain a family. The difference is that a *freguesa* is usually capable of paying off debts and

"shopping around" for a more favorable exchange relationship. The long economic depression of the 1950s and 1960s, however, has reduced the number of trading posts and the opportunity of finding a patrão is now limited. Under these conditions, if a family lacks a steady source of cash income it is often difficult to obtain needed supplies. Especially in town where unemployment and underemployment run high, people complain that they cannot even find a patrão to sell to them on credit.

A second change which challenges trading posts' power, particularly trading post patrões who are also landowners, are the enforcement of occupant land rights. Landless freguesas occupying and working land for one year and one day on public land, or ten years on private land, are eligible to claim up to 100 hectares. Freguesas also have the right to be paid indemnifications for improvements made to land if forced to move. These new rights serve as a new found check on patrão abuse of freguesas. There are drawbacks, however, as legal and bureaucratic entanglements favor families with more resources and political ties. The value of idemnification payment is also lessened by adverse court decisions giving low value to improvements and court delays which allow inflation to diminish cash values. Yet the threat to land rights gives landless freguesas a tool to use in their sturggle with the dominant class.

Beyond the availability of cash and some reduction in control over labor, many similarities with aviamento remain.

For example, there is unequal exchange for what is extracted or produced for what is imported. This results in a transfer of value from the workers to upper levels of the economic chain. Cash payments to extractors of timber such as sucupira, for example, range from as little as US \$2.50 per cubic meter, which is paid by the most exploitative patrão, to \$28.50, which is paid by the timber company. As can be seen there is much room for manipulation of price by patrões or middleman. Interestingly, in the next municipality sucupira sells for US \$30 which means that Itá as a whole is underpaid. On the next stage up in the exchange chain, a firm that saws and sells the wood, whether it is a small national firm or a large multinational such as Brumasa, Eidai, or Tropical, might expect a profit as high as 120%.

Manipulation of exchange insures a transfer of value from Itá. But there are other features of Itá's extractive dominated economy that add to value transfer. One is the lack of industry to process raw materials. Itá did have its sawmills and palm-heart canning factories, but none of them lasted for long or produced on a large scale. As a consequence, the vast majority of extracted produce in Itá is exported in unprocessed form. Transformation of these resources into commodities, which generates greater value and employment, is performed in other locations. In a sense, then, the potential value of extracted commodities is continuously being exported to be realized in other places.

The results of this process are clearly understood by the people of Itá. For example, many people comment that it is the timber wealth of Itá that built up the town of Breves and to a lesser extent, Santana of Macapá.

There is also another price being paid for Itá's role as a supplier of extracted materials. This involves severe ecological disruption and depletion of resources. As is shown in Chapter Three, this price has been paid since the colonial period. The latest case is with timber. As reserves of valuable timber are reduced beyond regeneration, the economic boom which has sustained Itá in its meager form will abate. Most timber contractors and landowners estimate Itá has twenty more years of extracting species with value on national and international markets. Afterward the sawmills will move on and timber extractors will be left without work. By 1986 there are already immediate signs of the damage of overexploitation of timber. The once viable collection of andiroba and acuba seeds for export and for medicinal oils has ended. The extraction of palm-heart, like timber, also promises to be self-depleting as well. With the loss of palm-heart, the highly desired açaí drink will be lost too.

Each loss of natural resource has a cumulative effect which threatens the workers' standard of living. Combined with problems of a growing population, improved technology for hunting and fishing (gill nets, motor boats) which have led to reduction of these sources of food, and knowledge of

higher standards of living in surrounding and more distant places (via mass media and direct exposure through migration), feelings of relative deprivation and frustration continue to grow.

Another change that timber extraction has brought to Itá is an incipient capitalist market for land, not just for the resources on land. Brumasa's extensive land purchases initiated this conversion to a land market. Yet, without an overland connection to the Transamazon highway nor a significant development in agriculture or cattle raising, Itá's land market has not proceeded further. Timber extraction, however, does create multiple problems with property boundaries. Most landownership is defined by vague boundaries and questionable titles originating during the rubber boom. Since timber extraction requires precise demarcations, vague boundaries, overlapping claims, and absence of titles lead to conflict over contested timber.

The economic processes initiated in the 1960s and 1970s also have had a strong impact on the local political system and on social class tensions. As stated in Chapter Five, the political system in Itá up until the mid-1980s was controlled by a dominant class composed of merchants, large landowners, professionals, and civil servants. Following the military coup in 1964, one particular faction within the dominant class, led by Alberto Viana, gained the favor of the military government. This faction functioned in a pro-centralist, pro-development, and pro-multinational

corporation fashion and was rewarded by a monopoly on access to the government apparatus (including means of repression) and by profitable interactions with extraction firms. For eighteen years this faction dominated the municipality, co-opting or silencing opposition and enriching itself through business deals and government corruption.

With the "abertura" in the late 1970s and 1980s, the hegemonic political control of Alberto's faction began to dissipate. The policies of the abertura decreased the monopoly on repressive use of the military police and tolerated increased local dissention. Alberto's silenced or co-opted opposition within the dominant class began to resurface and challenge his political power. But the most serious challenge has come from the evolving worker's movement.

The worker's movement is a product of increasing economic hardship within, as well as reduced political control over, the working class. With the prolonged economic depression and high inflation, the loss of trading posts and access to credit, the transformation of Itá into a cash economy, the reduction of dominant class control over workers, the continuous depletion of natural resources threatening the worker's standard of living, the increasing land conflicts, and the growing perceptions of relative deprivation and frustration despite modest prosperity brought by the timber boom, conditions are right to stimulate worker's questioning of existing social relations

of production and motivate them into action. These pressures are strong enough to largely overcome traditional segmentation within the working class. Through common threat to livelihood, the small landowning segment and autonomous terra firme farmers are increasingly radicalized. The landless freguesas and urban poor are also affected, although to a lesser extent. The final ingredient needed to spur workers to active resistance is political conscious-raising. Political conscious-raising is provided by the Catholic Church and by the Worker's Party (PT) and the rural union.

Political conscious-raising through the Church is presented in the form of progressive social Catholicism, or Liberation Theology, by Itá's Padre and by visiting agents of the Church. Messages of resistance to an oppressive government and dominant class are taken from the Bible and related to contemporary situations. Workers are organized into comunidades which serve as self-help groups and as forums for discussions of workers' problems. The stronger comunidades have actively resisted a wide range of threats to workers' livelihood. Among those mentioned are resistance to land invasions by multinational and local timber firms, resistance to depletion of açai by palm-heart extraction, resistance to land expulsions by landowners, and resistance to trading post exchange monopoly and price gouging by operating cantina cooperatives. The politically active comunidades have also served as the foundation for

the Worker's Party (PT) and the rural union. Since 1982 the rural union and PT have been threatening to radically alter the political and economic system in favor of the working class.

The worker's movement has put forth several vague plans for reform of the political economic system. Among their ideas is the promotion of small producer agriculture through loan programs and by obtaining technical advice, the organization of a market cooperative to distribute manioc and other commodities produced on the mainland to the islands of Itá, and the creation of a worker's store which will buy and sell goods directly in Belém, thus bypassing price manipulation of the trading post. The worker's movement also intends to provide legal aid for people to secure land rights. And finally, the worker's movement hopes to obtain an additional doctor and a hospital boat for the municipality.

The reforms suggested, if enacted, will undermine the dominant class's power and privileged position. As a result, there have been several retaliatory measures taken by the dominant class throughout the 1964-1986 period. Among these are public harassment of the movement through gossip, local public speaking systems, and regional media. The most common attack labels the movement as a communist tool. Public harassment has also included periodic imprisonment of the Padre and other activist workers. Other workers are threatened with expulsion from land if they

became active in the movement. Additional forms of retaliation include destruction of property, death threats, and election fraud, as in the case of the rural union.

By the end of the research period in 1986 the future of the workers' movement is still in question. To continue the struggle, the movement needs to recruit more followers, resist outside repression (by the timber firms and government), and be able to deliver promises of better standards of living once in power (if ever). Delivering better standards of living will be a difficult task. It will require wresting funds from a hostile state and national government as well as altering longstanding social, economic, and ecological obstacles. Among these obstacles are predatory extractionism resulting in resource depletion, poor soils for agriculture, lack of an internal market, transfer of value to the South and overseas, and exploitative patron-client and credit-debt relations which have been impoverishing the community for over 350 years.

APPENDIX
HOUSEHOLD SURVEY SCHEDULE

This version is abbreviated to exclude questions about television and other mass media which are not relevant to the present study.

1. Date 2. SUCAM No. 3. Informant

6-15. Name of each inhabitant in the house. The following information was collected on each person residing in the house.

a. relation to head of home. b. sex c. age e. birthplace
f. years of school g. level of literacy h. civil status
i. race j. job (up to three) k. payment in wages or barter
l. past jobs (up to three). m. payment in wages or barter
n. Where do your other children not living in your house live?
o. Where do your brothers and sisters live? Your spouses brothers and sisters?
p. Where have you lived besides in Ita? q. What year did you arrive here?
r. Have you been previously married to another person?
s. What is your religion? t. What is your political affiliation?

16. Do you own your house? Land? Do you have documents for your land? Who issued the documents?

17. Do you own other property? Do you have documents? Who issued the documents?

18. Can you calculate how much money you earn a month?
19. Who in your house uses the telephone of Telepará? Whom do they call? Where do they call?
20. In your house do you have:
 - a. electricity b. piped-in water c. toilet facilities
 - d. gas oven e. refrigerator f. freezer g. automobile
 - h. electric iron i. fan j. clock k. wrist watch
 - l. bicycle m. store bought furniture n. bed
 - o. mosquito net p. radio q. record player
21. Building material in house
22. Roofing material

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY SCHEDULE

This version is greatly abbreviated to eliminate questions on television, family, marriage, sexual behavior, child rearing, festivals, religion, local folklore, and crime which are not relevant to the present study.

1. Date 2. Name 3. SUCAM No. 4. Age 5. Sex
6. Profession 7. Political party. Do you vote?
8. Do you ever leave the community? How many times per year/month? Where do you go?
9. Have you lived in another city? Where?
10. Do you belong to an association, club, or union?
11. How many co-parents and godchildren do you have?
12. What is the greatest problem facing Ita? Second? Third?

13. Do you think life is better in the interior or in Ita? Why?

14. Do you buy goods on credit? When do you have to pay debts? Do you pay interest? Do you have a patron?

15. In your opinion, is Ita developed? What does Ita need to be more developed?

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Richard Pace was born on July 9, 1956, in Lake Forest, Illinois. He attended elementary and high school in North Carolina and Indiana. In 1980 he graduated with a B.A. in anthropology from Indiana University. Part of his undergraduate program was undertaken in São Paulo, Brazil. With this background he entered the University of Florida for graduate work in anthropology with a focus on Brazil.

In 1983 he earned a M.A. in anthropology. His research for the masters' thesis was on mutual aid networks set up in a Catholic Base Community and Pentecostal Church in Belém, Brazil. The title of the thesis is The Churches of Poverty: Religion's Role in Distributing Aid in a Shantytown of Belém, Brazil.

Between 1983 and 1986 he has conducted dissertation research in the Amazonian town of Itá. Upon completion of the Ph.D., he plans a career in university teaching and research.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Charles Wagley

Charles Wagley, Cochair
Graduate Research Professor,
Emeritus, of Anthropology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Marianne Schmink

Marianne Schmink, Cochair
Associate Professor of
Latin American Studies and
Anthropology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Maxine L. Margolis

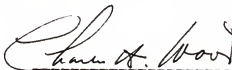
Maxine L. Margolis
Professor of Anthropology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Robert Lawless
Associate Professor of
Anthropology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Charles H. Wood
Associate Professor of
Sociology

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Anthropology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

December, 1987

Dean, Graduate School